



DIVINE HIDDENNESS

with good reason



A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

DIVINE HIDDENNESS
with good reason
A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

*Text is written, collected and published by : DanielApologetics,
whom is as the author - responsible for the content of this book.*

Version : eBook

Publishing year : 2024

ISBN : 978-80-570-6331-5

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

- **Short about the author and the book** (*p. 4*)

CHAPTER 1

- **What is the Skeptic's Argument?** (*p. 5*)

CHAPTER 2

- **One of us** (*p. 9*)

CHAPTER 3

- **Two groups of skeptics** (*p. 14*)

CHAPTER 4

- **What about non-resistant nonbelievers?** (*p. 20*)

CHAPTER 5

- **The Bible has answers to Divine Hiddenness!** (*p. 49*)

CHAPTER 6

- **Response to the Undeniable Proof Argument** (*p. 60*)

CHAPTER 7

- **Five skeptic objections answered** (*p. 84*)
 - «Contradiction in Job! Satan in GODs presence!» (*p. 86*)
 - «God hardened Pharaoh's heart! Free will?» (*p. 99*)
 - «No purpose & morals on atheism?!» (*p. 106*)
 - «What about those who have never heard?» (*p. 109*)
 - «Free will has been scientifically #debunked!» (*p. 130*)

EPILOGUE & ENDNOTES

- **A few closing thoughts** (*p. 143*)

INTRODUCTION

Short about the author and the book

Have you ever wondered; *“Why doesn’t God, as the maximally perfect and all-loving being, just give EVERYONE, all humans throughout history, undeniable proof of His existence – including those who claim to be non-resistant nonbelievers?”* – or something similar?

Hi! My name is Daniel and, well, that’s all... Feel free to just see me as a random Christian guy from the street or YouTube. Because ideally, I just want the theodicy answer in this book to speak for itself.

My background and my credentials, who I am – is not important. What is important here, is that my Christian theodicy answer, can logically stand up to scrutiny on an internal biblical critique. Because that is the underlying demand behind the argument from Divine Hiddenness.

- And in this book, I will answer the skeptic's academically strongest version of this argument against the Christian faith.

Thanks to family, friends, acquaintances, and strangers who have helped me with this book. You know who you are! And to you who are reading this; I pray and hope that this little book will be worth your time.

Soli Deo Gloria!

- Daniel from DanielApologetics

CHAPTER 1

What is the Skeptic's Argument?

Whether you read this little book on paperback, reading it as a free eBook, or listen to it as a free audiobook – notice that I do refer a handful of times to books, research and other sources. I have attached all of these as the book's endnotes in case you wish to follow those rabbit trails and subjects even further.

The skeptic's argument from divine hiddenness is known in the academic world to be one of the two strongest and best arguments against the existence of an all-powerful, all-loving GOD and the Christian faith.

- *The second argument is what is referred to as all the world's "gratuitous evil".*

(I have developed the Eternity Theodicy as a response and to this argument in another book).

'Divine Hiddenness' is an old argument that comes in many different shapes and forms. Skeptics have been using it ever since the great thinkers of antiquity and all the way up to new atheists online in our modern times.

In the world of academia (*as of the date I write this*), it's the atheist and Canadian philosophy professor J.L. Schellenberg¹ who is best known for fronting this kind of strongest version of the argument from divine hiddenness².

It should be pointed out though, that there are several ways of phrasing this argument out there – with for example different wordings of its premises. We can see that both from Schellenberg and others. Sometimes two premises can be merged into one, and other times, the whole argument is set up slightly different. It depends also often on how much background and context that is already laid out on the table for all parties.

Based on Prof. J. L. Schellenberg's various and recent publications on the subject, such as e.g. 'Introducing Philosophy for Canadians', pages 165-166 under; *"Would a Loving God Hide from Anyone?"*, published by Oxford University Press
– **the academically strongest version of the argument from divine hiddenness goes as follow:**

- (1) If no perfectly loving God exists, then God does not exist.
- (2) If a perfectly loving God exists, then there is a God who is always open to personal relationship with each human person.
- (3) If there is a God who is always open to personal relationship with each human person, then no human person is ever non-resistantly unaware that God exists.
- (4) If a perfectly loving God exists, then no human person is ever non-resistantly unaware that God exists (*from 2 and 3*).

(5) Some human persons are non-resistantly unaware that God exists.

(6) No perfectly loving God exists (*from 4 and 5*).

(7) God does not exist (*from 1 and 6*).

Are all these premises true? Are there theological, philosophical and logical answers? Can God have valid reasons? What does the Bible say in response to all this? And how can cognitive science play a role here?

Now, if you think the academic version is getting too technical with all its premises, the argument can also, if you prefer, easily be converted into a skeptical question which forces the Christian to turn over every relevant stone within the argument related to divine hiddenness;

“Why doesn’t God, as the maximally perfect and all-loving being, just give EVERYONE, all humans throughout history, including those who claim to be non-resistant nonbelievers, UNDENIABLE PROOF of His existence?”

In this little book, I will present a Christian theodicy answer in response – that both defends against, and attacks the skeptic’s argument – in several areas. And in the last chapter, I will answer the best and most relevant objections to my theodicy answer.

I am NOT going to argue for the existence of God or the credibility of the Bible in this book. Nor is this what the skeptic criticizes when using the argument from divine hiddenness.

If the skeptic is using the argument from divine hiddenness against a Christian, he or she is then attempting to do an internal critique of the Christian faith and God's character in the Bible.

It is therefore the character and motives of the biblical God as the maximally perfect and all-loving being that is criticized in the skeptic's argument from divine hiddenness – NOT the credibility of the Bible, whether God exists, or the existence of objective evil and goodness.

The skeptic actually HAVE TO accept, biblically and metaphysically (for the sake of argument and criticism!) both *the existence of the biblical God* as well as the *existence of objective evil and goodness* – to even be able to criticize and judge an allegedly *existing and objectively good* God from the Bible – whom I other Christians worship.

So, with that said, both the skeptic's academically strongest argument from divine hiddenness with all technical premises as well as just in question form of what we can call the “Undeniable Proof Argument” – are now both laid out here. So now, I can get to work.

CHAPTER 2

One of us

The apostle Paul writes, for example in *Romans 8:19-23* that both the children of God and the creation long for the day when the glory will be revealed.

No one biblically denies that our physical world experiences some form of divine hiddenness. But before I go to tools like the Bible and cognitive science, I want to first start here in the beginning of the book with one example, as an appetizer; *a theological and philosophical answer* to how divine hiddenness can be logically anchored in God's motives and a much BIGGER picture – far beyond what we are just observing through a peephole on this side of heaven.

I will elaborate further as well as give many more reasons in the course of this book, but we will start here – inspired by the Danish philosopher and theologian; Soren Kierkegaard. In the 1850s, he wrote the parable of 'The King and the Maid'. He puts perfect words on “God's bigger picture” in this parable.

Let me retell and build a bit further on his parable here;

“Throughout the kingdom, the mighty king was feared and famous, known far and wide for his power and achievements.

One day he was out on a royal errand in all his majestic splendor with hundreds of bodyguards, soldiers and court staff – when he suddenly spotted a poor maid working at a farm. This woman was unique, and she truly captured the king's heart.

From a distance, using his many connections, the king gathered a wealth of knowledge about who she was – as well as great insight into her personality.

This was an extremely powerful king who could easily have had any woman in the entire kingdom and beyond, but his heart was truly set on this poor maid...

It was her and no one else the king wanted to marry. It was her, and only her, he wanted as a wife.

But the king also saw a problem with this. As mentioned, he was feared, famous and mighty – known for his power and achievements throughout the kingdom...

If he had only turned up one day at the farm to propose to this maid – as the king, in all his majestic splendor, with his royal crown, royal clothes, surrounded by hundreds of bodyguards, soldiers and court staff – HOW could the king ultimately know that this poor maid accepted his proposal – for the “right” reasons?

*That she did not accept the proposal as a poor maid
– JUST BECAUSE she was terrified of what he as the
extremely mighty king perhaps would do to her if she
refused and said no?*

*That she would forever love him and be loyal?
That she didn't accept the proposal based only on
the overwhelming status difference?
That her motives for accepting his proposal
was not only selfish?
That she loved him for whom he really is – and not just
his royal crown?*

*The enormous difference in status was creating big
challenging, problems for the king who just really
wanted to build a solid marriage – founded on true,
mutual love relationship – for all the right reasons...*

*And all these problematic questions above would still
have been on the table even if he had first arranged
dozens of dates with her before the proposal...*

*So, what did he do?
For a longer period, the king left his royal throne and
dressed up as a poor servant. He then took the lowest
and hardest job position on the same farm as this
poor maid.*

And a long story short, taking fully on the role as one of her own people, by his admirable character and clearly demonstrated love for her in a very harsh environment – he won her true heart through blood, sweat and tears.

It was first sometime after all this that he revealed to his betrothed, the poor maid, that he himself was not a poor servant – but the very king of the entire kingdom. And everything he went through was for her – and a marriage built on true, mutual love.”

Remember this; God's focus is not just on mine or yours
80+ years of earthly life – God's focus is on eternity.
A “timeline” that also awaits us, His created
image-bearers...

(1 Corinthians 13:12)

“For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.”

So, there is probably much more behind of wisdom and motives from God when it comes to divine hiddenness than what I am able to bring up in this book.

I can almost already now hear a couple of objections from the skeptics after this presented parable.
If that's you, bear with me. We have only just begun.

This was only an appetizer.

And no, of course no man-made parable is perfect
– and definitely not when you put words to the uncreated
and infinite GOD...

But what this modified parable of Kierkegaard
gives you in its similarities, is a clear picture that
divine hiddenness, logically speaking,
can certainly be grounded in God's motives for
something that is ultimately far greater and better in
all kinds of ways – **in love, and for eternity!**

OK...

But can this theologically, philosophically and logically
also be anchored in what the Bible says?

The argument from divine hiddenness is, after all,
an internal critique...

Yes. It can.

And more on this later when we get to Chapter 5.

But first we need to look at the different types of
skeptics out there – and point out the important
distinction that separates them from one another.

CHAPTER 3

Two groups of skeptics

It is important to point out from the very beginning here that there exist mainly *two groups of skeptics*... And the distinction between these two groups – is important to emphasize.

The type of skeptics we find in the first group, makes the argument from divine hiddenness into a strong version. But the other group of skeptics, makes the whole argument into a weak version. So, keep the first group of skeptics in mind throughout this book. Because the other skeptic group, gives the Christian pretty much free ammunition, so to speak – and served on a shiny silver platter.

Let me explain what I mean.

In 2020, I uploaded a video³ on my YouTube-channel with clips featuring several popular and influential atheists who all answered clearly that they would NOT have become a Christian and follower of Jesus – even if they were given *undeniable proof* for the Christian truth claims ...

Since then, I have found even more such video clips which I've also uploaded to my channel.

And in 2021, The Atheist Experience had a survey with a similar god-question. The result was like an echo from all these videos. 19,000 atheists participated in the survey. Almost 16,500 of these, i.e. 86%, answered the same. “NO”.

I made an analyzed response video⁴ to all of this. There was as an example; 2,000 comments under the survey where most of them, interestingly directed huge disgust **specifically** against the Christian God – and done with an extremely high arrogance and self-image.

Yes. Loads of fists in the sky at GOD of the universe (GOD, with capital letters!), the uncaused first cause of the universe. The maximally perfect and all-loving being, and by definition; GOD.

- The atheists' comment section there was truly an astonishing read... As stardust, i.e. a collection of bacteria and cells (according to their own worldview), they had just as low view of God as their amount of humility to just the very ‘concept’ of a God.

That God does NOT reveal himself to this type of skeptics seems just logical...

Because with such a current attitude, haughtiness and heart condition – **WHAT ON EARTH IS THEN THE POINT OF PROOFS?**

If we take the skeptics in this group at their own word, wouldn't even undeniable proofs have resulted in a turnaround for the difference!

But most of all, there is a very strong biblical basis for God giving this type of people over to their own will – and to their own stubborn, proud and hardened heart... *(See for example Rom. 1:24-27 and Psalm. 81:12-13)*

This is what I meant by this group of skeptics giving so to speak, free ammunition served on a silver platter to the Christian. If the argument from divine hiddenness is used by a skeptic from this group, the Christian who responds can as shown, very quickly and easily, dismiss the entire argument on both logical and biblical grounds.

In this book, I will therefore not give Christians the opportunity to conflate this “86% skeptic group” with the other skeptic group who claim to be open and searching! Because not only does this lead to people being misrepresented – you also end up answering a weak straw-man version of the argument. And that’s not what I want to do.

So, right off the bat, from the very beginning – I want to remove every possibility of going in one of these directions. This book was written to tackle the strongest version of the argument from divine hiddenness!

In other words, *the strongest and best steelman version of the skeptics argument*. As it's presented in the world of academics.

With that laid out, there is also something else relevant that should be quickly mentioned and pointed out under this chapter...

Have you noticed that coming out as an atheist on social media – deconstructed from the Christian faith, seems to have become quite a popular trend among many people today?

Such videos are usually praised and well-received with a lot of attention, many followers and likes. Often you get a whole checklist – which is almost triumphantly presented with the amount of time dedicated to the Bible, prayer, studies and church – to justify their atheistic belief and conclusion.

The whole idea from the get-go, that a small human being is stuffing GOD (with capital letters!) into his own little subjective box, with own specific criteria that the CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE is required to accommodate and jump in circles around as an ultimatum – has a huge number of problems in several areas.

(Not just through biblical lenses – but also theologically, philosophically and logically. And in addition to this, cognitive science has also something interesting to contribute with in this area – which we shall look at in the next chapter).

Most often, there is also a recurring pattern among such type of influencers online, or loud atheists offline – that their claimed level of knowledge about e.g. The Bible, the Christian faith and discipleship – is very, **VERY HIGH**.

But with time however, after a handful of conversations and videos, it is often shown that a large amount of them – probably should have chosen far more **HUMBLE** words in their statements.

Far more humble words...

There is a reason why there is so much in the Bible about the importance of coming to God with humbleness.

And this cannot simply be ignored when an internal critique such as the argument from divine hiddenness is on the table – directed at the Christian God.

Because if going to e.g. James 4:6, it's written;
“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” ...

And in Psalm 25:9, we read; *“He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble His way.”*

Whomever it may be, and whatever the state of their heart is – at the end of the days; **GOD knows the condition of every human heart, His image-bearers.**

Nothing is hidden in the heart from God's sight of intentions and sincerity – neither in the hearts of atheists, the hearts of Christians or in the hearts of any other skeptics and people groups – from A to Z in the whole of human history.

The Bible is very clear that **God looks at the heart.**
(*See scriptures such as Jerem. 17:10, Luke 16:15, Acts 1:24, and Hebr. 4:13*).

You and I don't.

But we can hear words and see actions
– as e.g. from the mentioned “86% skeptic group”...

Remember, there is a full package deal that comes with becoming a Christian and a disciple of Jesus.

Many do not want the full package deal.

CHAPTER 4

What about non-resistant nonbelievers?

Many atheists can unfortunately be placed in the mentioned “86%-skeptical group” from previous chapter, but definitely not all. So, what about the other group of skeptics? The non-resistant nonbelievers?

And by that, I also refer to the skeptics who claim to be searching and absolutely open to becoming a Christian – BUT who says that they have the argument from divine hiddenness as a real stumbling block to continue on this journey...

These are the readers I aim for the most in this book. It was them I had in mind the most when I was writing.

- If you have already locked yourself onto objections and questions such as; “*What about people in the past, present and future who have never received or understood the gospel, or heard of Jesus?*”, and “*What about people in the Old Testament who lived before Jesus came?*”, and “*What about babies, children, the dementia patients and people with reduced cognitive functioning?*”... **THIS and more, I specifically respond to in Chapter 7, under the fourth objection.**

But for now, here in Chapter 4, I want to focus on those who claim to be genuine seeking skeptics, without resistance and absolutely open to the Christian God – but feels the weight of the argument from divine hiddenness is disproving the Christian faith...

Skeptics with a comment typically along the lines of;
*"My situation was XX... For a long time, I sought God.
I dedicated XX number of hours to Bible, study, prayer
and church – but all I got was deafening silence and
no God."* – or something along those lines.

On the surface, this type of argument from divine
hiddenness appears to be quite solid, right?
There's also a strong, emotional punch here, isn't it?

By the way, feel free to also build on the backstory
here in my example of the skeptic's frequent
comment above – in order to make the scenario even
more hard-hitting and convincing, if you can.
- My response will cover them all regardless.

Don't get me wrong, what I'm going to argue now,
is NOT that all skeptics with such story and background
are lacking sincerity and honesty. Let that be
resoundingly clear.

But what I **will** demonstrate now, are a couple of
reasons why this type of skeptical comment, integrated
and used in conjunction with the argument from
divine hiddenness – ultimately adds no weight
whatsoever to the scale in the skeptics favor. Nothing.

How so? Well, let me start by flipping the whole thing
on to myself and make almost the exact same claim
and argument – just opposite, as a Christian.

So, if I as a Christian claim and argue;

***"I HAVE**, and will continue to follow the truth wherever it leads. I've been reading some of the best by the best – of atheists own literature and arguments that is making the case that atheism and a godless universe is what the truth points to. I have also looked into the skeptics best criticizing arguments against the Christian faith. And after years of doing this, the truth to matter is this; I find the Christian truth claims far more solid and convincing.*

BUT, I am truly a searching and open-minded person who is absolutely willing and without resistance to becoming an atheist IF I get good enough counter evidence that it is rather atheism that best explains our reality. Because, if there exist no God, then I want to be god – at least over my own life, that's for sure.

I want to live consistently according to what actually corresponds to reality. That entails among other that a 'false Christian moral compass' – shall definitely not be standing in my personal way of life! Why would I let a 'false Christian moral compass' be a hinderance to me in chasing all kinds of fleshly opportunities, pleasures, wealth, power and experiences in life?

*For what are we humans in a GODLESS universe?
We are ultimately the product of a Big Bang⁵ that occurred 14+ billion years ago. A cosmological and purposeless coincidence from "nothing" (which is actually "something" – but just, definitely not God!).*

And after a 4.5-billion-year evolutionary process here on Earth, it just so happen to be "humans" who is the collection of bacteria and cells – that currently dominates this planet.

That's the hard truth to the matter.

And if one tries to argue that we, as collections of bacteria and cells, do not live under moral relativism, aka "everything is relative and subjective", but rather under atheistic moral realism (a godless universe, but where objective moral values and duties actually exist) – be aware that the stopping point in the academic literature always comes down to the explanation (and for a good reason) that all of these ultimately just exist as "brute facts", or in other words; "that's just the way it is"...

Why? Because having so many immaterial and various abstracts as ultimate absolutes, in a godless universe – is problematically very difficult to anchor and explain...

Not only individually, but also together, and as a whole!

"Horrifying" actions such as rape, cannibalism, trampling on or even murdering the weak, etc. – are far from actions that one can simply say that; "all people throughout history up until this day, just inherently and instinctively KNOW is actually objectively wrong" ... in a GODLESS universe. No. No way. Not even close!

- Because according to all the evolutionary theories and history of life through the lenses of atheism – it is precisely this that all beasts have always done since the dawn of time – form the first life to animals and humans – as the course of nature to this day! ⁶ Survival Of The Fittest, right?

So why is this now all the sudden OBJECTIVELY WRONG? In a godless universe, the only thing an opportunistic ape (chimpanzee in the jungle) and an opportunistic ape like me (human in a society) both have to do as a must – is to submit only to the bare minimum necessary for survival, and to avoid personally negative consequences.

*Apart from this, the whole world is open!
The world is your oyster, dear monkey / human!*

And if you are strong, lucky, daring, ruthless and brutal enough at the right time and place – choices and actions can result in great beneficial gains in the jungle or society – both with small and larger risks at stakes.

Either way, who on earth are you or I to judge a person's action and decision as an "OBJECTIVELY unethical and immoral" thing to do?

Who or what can with an ontologically objectivity; judge opportunistic people, aka monkeys in the society – who choose to go after an "unethical and immoral" way around the system for their own gain?

*So what? Opportunistic animals exist in the jungle,
and opportunistic animals exist in what we call
“human society”.*

*Nothing but Survival Of The Fittest is a hindrance and a
stopping point for what collections of bacteria and cells
“ought” to do or not for selfish purposes...*

*So whether it is ‘who’, or even ‘what’ that I “unethically
and immorally” have sex with, the number of what or
who I manipulate and exploit to satisfy my wildest
sexual fantasies – at the expense of theirs and others
future best interests...*

*Or if I choose to use “unethical and immoral” methods
to e.g. cheat, lie and step on society’s weaker
“monkeys”...? If I can get away with it... If the risk is
low and the stakes are high – leading to me securing
myself the most possible wealth, power and pleasures in
my 80-year life cycle...*

Then why ‘ought’ I OBJECTIVLY not to? Why?

*- In a godless universe, on one of many billions of
planets out there, where a collection of purposeless
bacteria and cells called “human” is the current
species that dominates the reality that is ‘Survival of
the Fittest’ – WHAT ELSE stops me as a strong and
opportunistic beast from carrying out all such things?*

*Who or what has an OBJECTIVE moral high ground
over me – if it's not just subjectively assigned by
me or you?*

Society and the best for human community, fellowship and harmony? OK... Which society? Mine or yours?

Various communities consisting of us, humans, worldwide – has carried out at least 20 genocides just since the Holocaust and the World War II alone. A handful are still going on as I write this book – Myanmar, Sudan and China being some of the examples.

It is also not so long ago since genocides was carried out in Guatemala, Rwanda, the Soviet Union, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Cambodia and many more⁷.

Point being, all societies do “unethically and immorally” as they want. Around the world.

Hundreds of millions support communism, hundreds of millions more support Islamic Sharia.

There are enormous differences in two such societies as to what e.g. is morally right and wrong, just and unjust – as well as laws, tolerance, responsibility, goals, and much, much more.

Some societies with collections of bacteria and cells prefer “this” – and other collections of bacteria and cells prefer “that”...

*So which social ideology do you prefer?
Moral values and duties are different in all of them.*

From the political left to the political right, from various primitive societies to typical Western societies today, from societies with communism to societies with Islamic Sharia. Take your (subjective) pick.

*In any case, based on all of this and more
– societies most certainly do not have an ontological objectivity for human's moral values and duties.*

So, what about the wellbeing and progress for humans? Human flourishing? Could this be something in which atheistic moral realism can anchor objective moral values and duties? No. Neither this.

There is nothing “objectively good” about human flourishing, progress and wellbeing on this planet. We are beasts. Animals. In fact, of all whom have so far dominated this planet – we humans are by far the worst.

In a godless universe, what are we but great parasites? We trash the ocean, cut down rainforests, exterminate animals, damage nature and consume all the earth's resources...

In other words, as an atheist, I would have looked at myself very differently, AND, not least, other purposeless collections of bacteria and cells, aka humans – as a result of my drive to live in accordance with the truth and what actually corresponds to reality – no matter how brutal and uncomfortable it might be... Because I see that an awareness of this – can have great benefits.

Illusions from upbringing, environment and society about what is right and wrong within my conscience – I would have diligently acclimatized accordingly. Just like holding an inflated beach ball under water. The beach ball will fight to float back up to the surface, but if you keep holding the ball under water long enough and poke hard with a sharp fingernail again and again; sooner or later, this will create a hole which fills the ball with water (i.e. resistance), which eventually causes the ball to sink... And to stop fighting upwards...

- This very same thing can also be done to our human conscience!

I therefore personally see many great advantages that logically follows to achieve more power, wealth and pleasures in life – by living smart, opportunistically and consistently according to the truth and what actually corresponds to reality in a godless universe – with what are ultimately purposeless collections of bacteria and cells – myself included.

We create the ultimate meaning of life; subjectively. Taste and preference. Everything else is an illusion.

Life after death is e.g. also a lie in a godless universe. Our planet, like other planets out there in the gigantic universe, will all ultimately end up with a purposeless heat death.

- And I will be just as much dead, dust and non-existent then as on the day of my death. Regardless of whether I lived my 80-year life cycle like Joseph Stalin, or like Mother Teresa...

“Love GOD. Love man.” – Jesus. (Matt. 22:34-40)

If we live in a godless universe, no spirit, no soul or life after death... If the Christian faith is false and man is not God's image-bearer, why on earth should I then strive daily to have the self-denying, self-sacrificing, Christ-like love that God calls us to?

The great and classical philosophers such as Friedrich Nietzsche, Jean-Paul Sarte and Bertrand Russell – all atheists, by the way – further emphasized on these points that I've mentioned here... What we, the universe and reality logically and consistently actually entail in a godless universe...

*World famous atheist and biologist, Prof. Richard Dawkins, writes on page. 133 of his book; *River out of Eden*⁸, the following: “The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but a blind, pitiless indifference. DNA neither cares nor knows. DNA just is. And we dance to its music.”*

And to quote the worldwide best-selling book called; ‘Sapiens: A brief history of mankind’ – by professor and atheist; Yuval Noah Harari⁹, page. 438:

“As far as we can tell, from a purely scientific viewpoint, human life has absolutely no meaning. Humans are the outcome of blind evolutionary processes that operate without goal or purpose... Hence any meaning that people ascribe to their lives is just a delusion.”

- So yes, based on what I have presented here, it is logically clear that my worldview and perception of reality would have changed ENORMOUSLY by going from Christian to atheist. Enormously...

That being said, over the last 4 years I have had a thorough deep-dive into the literature of atheism and the argument that a godless universe best explains reality – as well as researching the best critical arguments specifically against the Christian faith...

I am not convinced. I am still absolutely open and searching. But personally, I find Christian counterarguments far stronger both philosophically and historically - such as e.g. in terms of the explanatory power of what happened in Jerusalem 2000 years ago, the structural complexity of DNA, the metaphysics behind humans incredible consciousness and the rational language of mathematics – PLUS what best explains the actual uncaused first cause behind the entire universe.

*I am not a Christian because 'it works for me'...
I am a Christian because Jesus is the way, the TRUTH and the life.*

So, dear skeptic, what I've been doing now on the past 9 pages here, is to demonstrate that I am an absolutely open seeker of truth who has thought a lot about this topic here at hand... That I have studied arguments and the best of literature – from both sides... And that I do have valid reasons to renounce my Christian faith and indeed become an atheist – if the uncomfortable truth is that we live in a godless universe.

*Personally, I have honestly tried, but hard-hitting and sufficient evidence to make me an atheist – are simply just absent and **HIDDEN**".*

So now to the big million-dollar question; “Do YOU see the huge PROBLEM with what I have claimed and argued here on the last 9 pages **in my flipped Christian version of the atheist's same claimed**; 'seeking-and-absolutely-open-to-becoming-a-Christian'-argument?”

Do I have good points?

- Yes. But what is the big problem? What is ultimately my argumentation method?

I resort to my own claimed openness, truth-seeking, honesty and rationality – and then use THIS integrated with an *argument against atheism*.

Notice that the atheist is doing EXACTLY the same by integrating this into his argument from divine hiddenness – against Christianity!

The integration of such argumentation method is a problematic big weakness with the strongest version of the argument from divine hiddenness.

Whether you know the person or not does not matter.
Because what is this argument ultimately?

“A personal assertion about one's own claimed, subjective brain condition and integrity!”

And what does this mean?

- It means that the opponent can ONLY criticize this argument by making a personal attack, a logical fallacy (ad-hominem), OR by making a completely extreme psychoanalysis that requires 100% access to everything relevant in the life that has taken place inside the person's head – and right up to the current held worldview.

Not only is such a mentioned psychoanalysis completely beyond crazy, illogical and unrealistic... The burden of proof for a skeptic who even tries to stand on such an argumentation method – is also hopelessly impossible.

So, whether it comes from a sincere atheist or Christian, what is ultimately a; 'Take my word for it!', and #TrustMeBro – an unprovable assertion about one's own claimed, subjective brain condition and integrity in life – does absolutely nothing for tipping the scale in one's favor!

As shown, the opponent can easily do exactly the same for HIS position.

- And then we have all of the sudden 2 truth-seeking people who both strongly disagree AND resort to a sincere, but ultimately; 'Take my word for it!' and #TrustMeBro – an unprovable assertion about one's own claimed, subjective brain condition and integrity in life – *as an argument in favor for his position!*

Hence, this type of argumentation method has logically NOTHING to do in a discussion or debate.
Nothing. Nada. Nichts. This one we have now included.

The skeptic therefore need to use another approach with the argument from divine hiddenness.

It's not his or her genuine sincerity that is criticized – but the argumentation method that is used.

... Because an unprovable claim about one's own asserted, subjective brain condition and integrity in life – is, as shown, no more of an argument for your atheism than it is for my Christian faith.

Dear Atheist, I want to ask you something...
If a believer uses e.g. my flipped Christian version of the argument I just gave here – aren't you also then thinking ***at first*** about this Christian person, one or more of these;

*“She just has blind faith!” ,
“She is only a Christian because her family and
friends are so!” ,
“She only uses religion as a crutch because she is afraid
of death and reality!” ,
“She has not looked enough into the criticism and
arguments AGAINST the Christian faith!” ,
“Her Christian bias prevents her from doing
a sensible analysis!”*

... Or something along these lines? Like, deep inside?

Same question to you, dear Christian reader...
When an atheist uses e.g. this argument – aren’t you also
then thinking *at first* about this atheist person,
one or more of these;

*“He has hardened his heart!” ,
“He is only an atheist because his family
and friends are so!” ,
“He’s only an atheist because he wants to be his
own god!” ,
“He has not looked enough into the arguments FOR
the Christian faith!” ,
“His atheistic bias prevents him from doing
a sensible analysis!”*

... Or something along these lines? Like, deep inside?

Why do I assume that the mentioned type of
argumentation will result in such thoughts about
each other – from atheists and Christians?

- Because all logic, and all cognitive science about our human brain points to exactly this.

So, the atheist claimed; '*seeking-and-absolutely-open-to-becoming-a-Christian*'-argument used in conjunction with divine hiddenness, receives neither any support from cognitive science, aka brain science.

Far from it!

(And yes, the same goes for a flipped, Christian version).

In my endnotes, I link and refer to sources such as;

Open Mind¹⁰ ,

Behavioral Science & Policy Association¹¹ ,

Psychology Today¹² ,

National Library of Medicine¹³ ,

and Science Alert¹⁴.

We humans do NOT ONLY act on rationality.

It simply is not how the brain works!

- We are also **very much influenced** by *emotional feelings rooted in e.g. our biases, pride, comfort zone, tribalism and personal desires*.

This is NO EXCEPTION when the opponent's argument is an unprovable assertion about his own claimed, subjective brain condition and integrity – ***integrated and used in an attempt as an argument to invalidate OUR own worldview.***

- So, no! Of course we won't swallow what is, at the end of the day, ultimately just empty and unprovable assertions about one's subjective brain condition and integrity – as a valid argument against our currently held position and worldview!

Atheists don't do that. Christians don't do that.

Not just on legitimate logical and scientific grounds, but also because he or she is from the “*other camp*”.

...And that's just how we humans are.

On top of this, we also often have a big blind spot for our bias in how we evaluate evidence and arguments for and against our own current held position – in multiple areas.

Conspiracy theories, society topics, political views, and religious beliefs – we interpret all ideologies primarily in the direction of what we personally want to be true.

This is also what my referred sources from cognitive science is pointing out.

And if you think;

“No. Other people maybe, yes - but not me!”...

Well, then it's exactly you I'm talking to here!

Let me elaborate a little bit further.

There are many political conflicts and social disagreements that I can use as an example here, but let's just say that we e.g. put 500 climate activists and 500 climate skeptics in the same room – with their best evidence for their respective positions...

How many of these do you think will humbly admit mistakes, swallow their pride – and make a complete U-turn to the other party's point of view?

- Cognitive science and reality points to a low number, a very low number...

***And why on earth shouldn't this apply at least just as much to the life-changing, self-denying, self-sacrificing package deal that comes with becoming a Christian and a disciple of Jesus? It's a full package.
Many, many people don't want that full package...***

Despite what you might have gotten the impression of on the last few pages, I actually personally believe that there ARE many skeptics out there who do not necessarily come to God with resistance – but with a searching heart and an openness to God and the Christian faith.

HOWEVER, from the seven premises in the academically strongest version of the argument from divine hiddenness, the following claims are made;

"If GOD, by definition, the maximally perfect and all-loving being exists, no open and searching human being will be unaware of GOD's existence."

And onwards...

“But because it does exist open and searching people who are unaware of the existence of God, this means that God, the maximally perfect and all-loving being does not exist.”

Here I see several problematic points that need to be addressed. First of all, can't a Christian also *logically* flip and use this as a direct counterargument?

▸ Because doesn't REALLY the same logic follow that if the reality is that we live in a godless universe, *then NO open and searching people will be ignorant that there does NOT exist a God, the maximally perfect and all-loving being?*

▸ And since *it does exist* open and searching people who are not unaware, but strongly convinced of the existence of God, the maximally perfect and all-loving being – that therefore God, the maximally perfect and all-loving being do exists?

If you as a skeptic now answer;

“NO and NO! Because if God really do exist and is the maximally perfect and all-loving being, He must give us undeniable proof of His existence so that we all cannot possibly believe anything but this very thing!”

Well, then I wrote **Chapter 6** – ***“Response to the Undeniable Proof Argument”*** precisely for you!

In addition to this, highly relevant is also the fourth objection under **Chapter 7** – *“What about all the people throughout human history who have never heard of Jesus and the gospel?”*

together with; **Chapter 5** – *“The Bible has answers to divine hiddenness!”*...

But if you don't want to wait until then, I can also point out a couple of more problems – just directly here and now.

One of them is that the premises only assume the truth of its claims and the argument's conclusion – without having first been explained and supported (*Begging the question fallacy*).

On top of a couple of logical, theological and philosophical problems – its worst of all; also major **biblical problems** with the premises of the argument.

Because not only does it seem like important Christian metaphysical truth claims from the Bible; such as the “*afterlife*” and “*eternity*” has been ignored from the academy version's premises – which IS creating a false dichotomy / false Either-Or dilemma from the get-go...

- **But on top of this**, it does not seem either as if the premises have considered what the Bible actually says relevantly and specifically about “*unaware*”, “*open*” and “*seeking*” people.

(More on this in the three chapters mentioned above).

Remember, the argument from divine hiddenness is an internal critique of the Christian faith...

- So to *throw* from the start the full metaphysics of the Bible, as well as the Bible's passages about such people – just, *out the window* – **and then** claiming to do an INTERNAL critique of it – is as if I were to demand that you show me how strong you are – WITHOUT you being allowed to use your muscles.

So something is definitely not right here, but we get to more on this in the next chapters of this book.

When we talk about people who claim to be truly searching and absolutely open to becoming Christians, one of the big questions then is also;

How long does this state last before one becomes e.g. either just apathetic to it all, a believer in God, or a die-hard atheist?

...And if the search itself eventually comes back at a later point in life?

A NON-STOP, fully charged zeal and search for God with absolute openness – unaffected by biases, emotions, comfort zone, tribalism and many other factors?

NO. I don't buy it. Based on everything I've mentioned and referenced in this chapter, I can't help but being very skeptical about that.

- *And I even have cognitive science on my side in this.*

One more thing!

**Have we also forgotten here what a huge role
TIMING has in our lives?**

Often times, just seconds can make all the difference.

In 2015, I ended e.g. up in Slovakia due to a career slump. I was pretty down because of this.

A far better opportunity was missed as a result of just a small glitch that could have easily been avoided...

- Then one day down here in Slovakia, to top everything of, my hair clipper also stopped working...

So in addition to all, I now also looked like a freakshow with my half-shaved head.

And after going embarrassed around in all city to several hair salons to find an English-speaking hairdresser, I finally found one...

This hairdresser is today my very best friend
– and my beloved wife.

It's so amazing to look back on now!

I definitely experienced what is called; “The Butterfly Effect”. What is that? A concept of chaos theory.

Let me illustrate with a different example other than from my own life.

What is meant by The Butterfly Effect, is e.g. that just a small flap of a butterfly's wing – is enough to send a pollen seed to land on a specific spot that grows into a large tree.

And 150 years later, this now huge, sturdy tree became the life-saving salvation of four people who were able to climb it just in time before a sudden water flood swept over them and was about to send them down a high cliff.

Had this now big and strong tree not grown exactly where it was, there would have been no other safe points within reach for these four people before the nearby cliff – with a drop so high that it would have killed them, if not by drowning.

...The idea in this chaos theory scenario is that just a small flap of a butterfly's wings, played a decisive big role here 150 years earlier. A small flap of a butterfly's wings contributed to the fact that four people survived a major disaster that day.

- Think about how many scenarios of chaos theory that are potentially the reality in our lives – that we just don't see on this side of heaven yet?

How I met my wife and soulmate is a good example that I can actually look back on. And I have many other such examples in my life. Perhaps you do too?

Small, sensitive variations in chaos can make a huge difference in my life – and in your life.

That your parents met, and you were born included.

Is it really so unthinkable that the ETERNAL God, the maximally perfect and all-loving being – knows all times, places and heart conditions for where, for when, and the amount His created image-bearers are most ripe and receptive to His revelation – so that it leads to a true, mutual love relationship of their own free will – and produces the best possible future fruits in all kinds of areas?

I had plenty of good evidences that Veronika would make a wonderful wife. But if I were to ever experience and find out, there did come a point where I would eventually have to take a step out in trust and faith in these evidences, and her – for my future.

In fact, every single relationship we humans have that is built on love and trust, ultimately requires a step out IN FAITH. This goes **also** for our relationship with God.

As the ultimate chess player, who knows our heart condition – *God also knows at all times whether special revelations to individuals would have made any difference at all for the best outcome* – both individually and for the person's circle of family, friends, neighbors as well as colleagues.

And who on earth are you or I anyway, to limit GOD spiritually or physically – to whom, where and when He can give these during our entire existence?

Remember the parable of 'The King and the Maid' from Chapter 2... And let me also repeat this verse:

(1 Corinthians 13:12)

“For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.”

And by the way, if you in current situation are not in that mentioned “86% skeptic group” from Chapter 3, but still claim to be an open and searching skeptic – who on earth is then to say that your journey and search for God is over for good, dear skeptic?

Or have you become completely entrenched to “*Camp God Does Not Exist*”? Remember to check the status of your inner skeptic radar!

And remember earlier what I said about “the beach ball & the consciousness”? Well, the same can ALSO be done with resisting the Holy Spirit!

(See e.g. Acts 7:51)

When we end up more in one camp over the other, and as cognitive science also shows, we as humans then have a strong tendency to turn up our inner skeptic radar – WHEN arguments and evidence go AGAINST the position we favor (that goes for Christians included!).

Huge confirmation bias and an inconsistent high level on the inner skeptic radar, are for many a big blind spot.

But for many others, all their cards have been clearly laid out on the table.

A good example is Prof. Thomas Nagel, a very influential atheist and professor of both philosophy and law at the New York University, who wrote a book published by the Oxford University Press in 1997 called; "The Last Words"¹⁵.

In chapter 7, on page 130, he writes, among other things, the following;

"I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers.

- It isn't just that I don't believe in God and, naturally, hope that I'm right in my belief. It's that I hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that."

When it all comes down to it, you can be agnostic about many things... But there are certain situations and questions we encounter in life that quite quickly WILL force us to take the step either more in the direction of "Camp God Exists", or "Camp God Doesn't Exist".

Death, is one of several examples.

When YOU bury your parents, siblings, spouse and love of your life, or even your dear child...

What do you think and do then?

During and after the funeral?

Is there more between heaven and earth, or are your loved ones now, ultimately just, worm food? ...

What best explains the uncaused first cause to the origin of the universe? Moral values and duties together with human's purpose in life – could also have been brought up here.

These are all examples of questions we **WILL** be confronted with sooner or later in life, often again and again – **no matter** how hard we try to avoid them in everyday life, or in our own minds...

And your answers to these mentioned questions alone, all affect enormously how see yourself and others, how you think, and how you live your life.

Many people today are not primarily on a truth quest in life – they are on a happiness quest.

Can you, as a genuine truth-seeker, represent the other side whom you disagree with, and make a strong steelman version of their position – based on some of the best of literature over the centuries?

Or do you settle for a weak straw man version to represent the opposing side – based primarily on low-hanging fruit such as memes and slogans found online?

*Remember also that often times,
the position of not taking a position – is still a position...*

A choice not to make a choice – is still a choice...

Apathy included.

Death comes to us all. On the road trip that is our lifetime, you can drive straight ahead on the motorway for a long, long time – but sooner or later you will have to take an exit in order to be able to continue your journey on the motorway again.

And it is at these exits that you, and all of us, WILL inevitably be confronted with life's big questions – and met with important stones to turn over in life.

The confrontation is inevitable, BUT you have the choice to speed through these exits and pretend what you saw, heard and felt there – never was there.

- In that case, you have still made a choice.

A choice to ignore.

A choice to be apathetic...

God can see our hearts...

And God holds us accountable for our choices...

(Jeremiah 17:9-10)

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? “I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.”

So what about all the people in human history,
from A to Z who have never heard of Jesus,
or received and understood the gospel?
Including the REAL non-resistant nonbelievers?
As mentioned earlier, this, is something we will look at
in Chapter 7 of this book.

CHAPTER 5

The Bible has answers to Divine Hiddenness!

In the beginning, under the conditions of Eden, God our Creator had taken up residence among us in this physical world. He walked with humans in an intimate and completely different way before the fall (*Gen. 3:8*). Heaven and earth overlapped.

But at the fall, when humans chose the path of disobedience, rebellion and sin – God, as warned, removed our access to the Tree of Life (*Gen. 2:17 and Gen. 3:22-24*), which not only led to physical death for us humans – but also the first stage of divine hiddenness.

Man was cast out of Eden where heaven and earth overlapped. Where God's presence in our physical world, BEFORE the fall, was manifested in a completely unique and intimate way. Man's physical body – corrupt and chained to sin, was now a separation from such a presence. And without access to the Tree of Life, death is inevitable in a physical world.

We humans, are created in God's image...

Man cannot live physically forever SEPARATELY from God – in a corrupt body chained to sin.

We are like a dying mobile phone with a bad battery – disconnected from the charger...

How so?

- Because a “mobile phone” with a bad battery, that is constantly connected to “The Powerful Charger”, will sooner or later begin to expand, overheat and eventually start to burn...

God wants us, His physical image-bearers,
to live for all eternity – WITH Him.

- But not that we should live eternally in our sin and evil. Sin and evil can also NOT exist in the **fullness of God's holy glory and presence**. Because the fullness of His holy glory and presence is like a consuming fire!
(See e.g. Heb. 10:26-28, Heb. 12:29 and 1 Tim 6:16)

That goes for both our body, spirit and soul...

But through Jesus, justified and sanctified in Him, we are able to both get a new body – a new battery, AND, again be connected to the charger – to GOD, the Tree of Life. (See e.g. 1 Pet. 2:24, 1 John 4:9, Rom. 6:6, Rom. 7:24-25, and John 5:21)

In the Bible, we also find many examples of that after the fall of man, as evil took more and more root; that just a small dose of God's manifestation in our physical reality – is described as being an experience that is so gigantic, overwhelming, and almost unbearable for a sinful human in this fallen world – whether it was in the form of His mighty voice from a burning mountain, a cloud – or as the unique Angel of the Lord.

Take for example Gideon (*Judg. 6:22-23*), Moses and the people of Israel (*Deut. 5:22-27*), or Jesus' transfiguration on Mount Hermon (*Matt. 17:5-9*).

Do you really think that it is THIS TYPE of distant, separated, and extremely limited relationship that God, the maximally perfect and all-loving being, wants to have with humans, created in His image – **for all eternity??** Absolutely not!

In *Exodus 33:17-23*, just before God renews the covenant with the people of Israel, Moses asked God to see His glory. And in that just mentioned passage above, we see God answering Moses with words such as;

“I will put you in a crevice in the rock... As My glory passes by, I will cover you with My hand until I’ve passed by... Then I’ll remove My hand so you may see My back... You cannot see My face, because a man cannot see Me and live...”

God's incarnation and prophetic words about the promised Messiah were to happen through the people of Israel, and in Him – among other things, bring salvation **to all nations** in a rebellious, lost and sinful world separated from the fullness of God's holy glory and presence...
(See e.g. *Isaiah. 49:6* and *Matt. 12:17-21*)

Moses and his important role was a unique one in human history – but also the unique Moses, like all the rest of us, was still a human – still a sinner. And as the previous mentioned passages from the Bible testify to; the fullness of God's holy glory and presence is like a consuming fire – and it would have consumed even Moses himself if God had not shielded him.

But God has given the promise to His children that there will come a time when we **WILL** see His face...
(See e.g. 1 Cor. 13:8-13, Matt. 5:8, and Rev. 22:3-4)

So what is He waiting for? **“The full number”**...
(Rom. 11:25 and Rev. 6:9-11)
and that **“The Gospel is preached to all nations”**...
(Mark 13:10 and Matt. 28:16-20)

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9)

Sin and evil is not a “thing”. They have no positive ontological status. Sin and evil is like rust.
If you take the rust out of the car, you have a better car.
But if you take the car out of the rust, you have nothing.

God hates sin, but He loves us more!

If God were to just “snap” all sin and evil out from existence, in its full entirety this very moment – He would then also have to remove all the non-perfect creatures that possess the ability to be even CAPABLE of sinning and doing evil! ...*That means the removal of beings such as me... And you... Humans...*

Imagine this, you are in a great war and evil enemies have captured hostages whom you love dearly. The situation is now that you have two options:

(1) You can drop a nuclear bomb on the entire area which will annihilate all enemies and stop for good that another such war will ever occur again in the future. BUT, there is a catch with this option...

This choice also results in that all the hostages are being killed. Not only that, in addition to this, new and different wars would now have arisen from elsewhere and within – specifically against YOU. Why? Because your enormous hatred for the enemy was greater than your wits – and your love for the captured hostages.

So what is the other option?

(2) You can undertake a rather advanced, time-consuming and special rescue operation. It will be costly in many areas, but the end result will be that all the hostages you love so dearly will be freed and survive + all vicious enemies will be annihilated both physically and ideologically – stopping for good that another war will ever arise in the future.

So guess which option God would have gone for here?
The same as you.

God is not interested in just winning some battles here and there... God is interested in winning the whole war – once and for all.

*A temporary, quick-fix solution with duct tape
will not last forever...
An eternal solution requires something more.*

GOD foreknew that by creating humans, who by definition are neither eternal nor maximally perfect beings – to then so share some of His communicable and God-given attributes with us, as His image-bearers (like for example free will) – would not only make us CAPABLE to even have at all, a true mutual love relationship with Him...

It would ALSO make us capable of doing lawlessness and disobedience, capable of a rebellious misuse of these God-given attributes and not to reflect Him as His image bearers – and thus the actualization of sin and evil...

We humans often have to resort to a plan B.
We make mistakes. We find ourselves in situations we could not foresee. God has never had a plan B!
He doesn't make mistakes. He has divine foreknowledge.
And no, with regard to free will; God's foreknowledge do not necessitate predestination. I will demonstrate that with two examples in Chapter 7 (one biblical included).

God has been active with Plan A ever since both the heavenly rebellion and the fall of man.

In heaven and on earth, above all living creatures
– was man given a completely undeserved gift, privilege and status; “created in the image of God”.

God wants to have with us, His image-bearers – a true mutual love relationship. We love, and we have the ability to even BE CAPABLE of loving – because God first loved us (*1 John 4:19*).

As it is also written; “God is love” (*1 John 4:16*)
– But true love cannot be programmed, bought or forced – it *must be given* out of one’s free will...

We humans can reflect God as His physical image-bearers – but we can also do the exact OPPOSITE... *Of course, our choices cannot affect God's omnipotence in the true sense, BUT biblically speaking, our sin and maturity can, in some cases, affect the timing of God's chosen actions in this physical world. Something we just saw an example of in 2 Peter 3:9.*

Matthew 23:37 is another example. Jesus says here:
*“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!
HOW OFTEN I WANTED to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, **BUT YOU WERE NOT WILLING.**”*

In his book, “The Great Divorce”, C.S. Lewis sums it all up with a perfect quote;

*“There are only two kinds of people in the end:
those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’
and those to whom God says, in the end,
‘Thy will be done.’*

All that are in Hell, choose it.

Without that self-choice there could be no Hell.”

If the all-loving GOOD GOD, the maximally perfect being, had only e.g. created and programmed us humans, angels and other spiritual beings from Day 1 – as heavenly robots without potential, characteristics, desires and abilities to perform evil actions...

- Then EVERYTHING would still have been for God's glory – just WITHOUT His own directed, self-actualized and self-programmed “theater play” full of all the worlds evil, sin and suffering.

And since both sinful thoughts and evil actions would then have been physically and mentally impossible for us as programmed, heavenly robots – we would not have missed or felt the lack of anything either – more than a fish swims at the bottom of the sea while listening to Mozart and philosophizing on what it would really be like to be able to walk with legs on dry land, swing from treetop to treetop with two arms, and use his fins to actually fly from one sea to another.

*Completely distant, unimaginable and non-existent
for a fish limited to its instincts, right?*

The same would have been the case with the concept of sin, evil and suffering for us as humans – as programmed, heavenly robots – ordained since creation and Day 1 in the beginning by God. And yes, by that, the same would then also have been the case for God's angels and other spiritual creatures...

Wouldn't THIS kind of reality have been win-win and made everyone 100% satisfied – especially an all-loving and all-powerful GOOD GOD? As the maximally perfect being?

Heavenly and human rebellion, sin, death, suffering, evil, hell – ***everything could then have been avoided!*** God's incarnation and Jesus' crucifixion included...

- UNLESS there is something about human beings as God's special image-bearers, with a God-given free will by His grace, CAN respond back with to God in spirit (*John 4:23-24*) – and thus create something completely unique that 'programmed heavenly robots' can NOT do?

Yes... There is... A true, mutual love relationship.

(PS, I am responding to the skeptic's objection about "free will = sin in heaven", under Chapter 7).

So far in this chapter we have looked at what biblically triggered divine hiddenness, why it is still a part of our reality – and God's promises of restoration. But it's not just words and promises.

I will now give a biblical example that God has physically demonstrated in actions His active and original plan A to restore the overlap between heaven and earth – where His presence before the fall was manifested in a completely unique and intimate way among his image-bearers.

God's incarnation in the Son, Jesus Christ, demonstrated in a deeply profound and powerful way that all His children, of all nations, shall see His glory.

For what do we read in Jesus' high priestly prayer from John 17:24?

*“Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, **SO THAT THE MAY SEE MY GLORY** which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.”*

Just before Jesus died on the cross, He said;
“It is finished!” (John 19:30)...

► And what happened when Jesus died on the cross – with the very thick **curtain** into the innermost Holiest of Holy room in the Jewish temple?

... The room where only the high priest could enter, and only ONCE a year – and only after going through quite the advanced purification process, to make atonement for his own and the people's sins?

... The room, where on this one day of the year, he had to hold burning and smoking incense before his eyes when he entered – to avoid looking directly onto God's holy presence?¹⁶

Mark 15:37-38 (see also Matthew and Luke) informs exactly about what happened with this very thick curtain in to the innermost Holiest of Holy room in the Jewish temple...

It tore in half – from the TOP down!

- NOT from the bottom up... From the TOP down!

“Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the fresh and living way that He inaugurated for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in the assurance that faith brings, because we have had our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water.” (Hebrews 10:19-22)

CHAPTER 6

Response to the Undeniable Proof Argument

First of all, I want to get some “laundry” out of the way and quickly respond to a relevant skeptical slogan that often appears both online and offline in conjunction with arguments from divine hiddenness.

- It is popularized and fronted by Matt Dillahunty (a renowned atheist activist and debater from the USA).

It goes like this:

“If there is a God, then that God knows exactly what it would take to make me believe in Him.

And the fact that this God has not done this for me, means that either He doesn’t exist, or that He does – but doesn’t want me to know that He exist...

Either way; not my problem.”

By reading sentence by sentence, slowly and carefully

- I observe the following 4 problems with the statement:

(1) If this is the apathetic, high-horse attitude brought into the topic and argument from divine hiddenness, if this is the approach with demands aimed specifically at the Christian God – then one is biblically, very much ill-informed.

(See e.g. Chapters 3 and 5 + more here shortly).

(2) The statement has a strong 'vibe' of that the GOD of the Universe (with capital letters) is expected to almost jump through circles on command for a small, created human. This is an illogical image of God in any monotheistic religions out there.

(3) God's motives are not simply to convince people to believe that He exists (*see more in Chapters 2 and 5*).

As we went through in Chapter 3, the whole line of thinking that one are in position to stuff THE GOD of the Universe into his / her own little box of own subjective criteria and rules that are demanded to be met (*or else...*) – are already problematic fallacies given the status of humans and a being such as GOD.

But this slogan that we are looking at now, is actually, if possible, even more problematic in its thinking and argumentation method.

Why?

- Because here, there is not even a thought-out criterion and standard for what will even count as proof of God. Thus, technically speaking – everything can then also be rejected as proof of God. (Such as hallucinations, holograms or aliens).

“But God would have known what proof I needed!”

- OK then, forget these first three points for a moment. There is also another BIG pink elephant in the room!

Another logical problem is how the argument has integrated a false dichotomy; a false Either-Or dilemma, both of which put God in a bad light no matter what.

These are absolutely not the only two explanations that can be given to the skeptic's objection!

Because what if the atheist for example belong to the "86% skeptic group" referred to in Chapter 3?

- The survey from The Atheist Experience where close to 16,500 out of 19,000 atheists answered that even if God existed, they would not have worshiped Him?

If we take the skeptics in this group at their own word, God's undeniable evidence would not have resulted in a repentance and difference anyway.

- So what really then is the point of God's evidence?
(Read more in Chapter 3 and further here in Chapter 6).

The Bible is very clear that **God looks at the heart.**
(See scriptures such as Jerem. 17:10, Luke 16:15, Acts 1:24, and Heb. 4:13).

(4) *"Either way; not my problem."...?*

So not only does the slogan as shown have a false dichotomy, or lack a basic understanding of how God is viewed in any monotheistic religion – the Christian God from the Bible included...

But also; What about the heart status in all of this?

Where's the biblically, important humility before the GOD of the universe (in capital letters) and potentially the truth itself?

“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”
(James 4:6)

In an internal critique of the Christian faith, this is also simply not something that can just be handwaved and ignored!

And when an apathetic “not-my-problem” is expressed from the skeptic's own lips – can one really then claim to be a hungry and active seeker of truth?

- A person who is displaying this kind of apathetic attitude towards the great God-question in life and potentially the ultimate truth out there – is certainly NOT a person I would have followed or taken influence from in the ultimate search for truth in life...

Would you?

So, when these 4 points are laid out on the table in addition to the other logical and internal critique errors – it becomes very easy for the Christian to just place the atheist who regurgitates this slogan, into that mentioned “86% skeptic group”...

I don't want Christians to have that opportunity here. That's too easy. And it's not fair to the remaining “14%” of skeptics. This topic is NOT a One Size fit all.

The “86% skeptic group” makes the argument from divine hiddenness into a weak straw-man version – and not a strong steel man version à la Prof. J.L. Schellenberg and others.

That is why I have been very clear in this book from the get-go that there are mainly two groups of skeptics. And the distinction between these two groups, is important to underline.

(By the way, for your information, the atheist Dillahunty, who popularized this slogan we just went through, has himself said on for example; this referenced episode¹⁷ of The Atheist Experience, that he would not have become a Christian and follower of Jesus – even IF the whole thing was true).

So, if you happen to be a skeptic with an apathetic “not-my-problem” attitude to life's great question of God existence and potentially the ultimate truth out there, or an atheist in the “86% skeptic group” who declares that undeniable evidence of God would not have resulted in a repentance and difference anyway – well, then I DON'T really have very much more to say to you...

We might as well now just go get a pizza together and find something else to do.

I DO however have something to say to the other group of skeptics – those who claim to be searching and absolutely open to becoming a Christian...

(I've unpacked a lot already on that in Chapter 4, so go back there if a refreshment is needed. More will also be covered in Chapter 7).

But I want to ensure that no stone are left unturned in this theodicy to the divine hiddenness argument.

- That's why I'm here writing; **Chapter 6 – “Response to the Undeniable Proof Argument”**. So with the laundry out of the way at the beginning of this chapter, let's now get into it.

The criticizing objection in this argument is almost identical to the academically strongest version – but in a question form, without the technical premises. The Undeniable Proof Argument integrates all people, from A to Z, who have and ever will exist in human history – including non-resistant nonbelievers, skeptics who claim to be searching and absolutely open to becoming a Christian – and everything in-between.

So, the Undeniable Proof Argument, goes as follows; **“Why doesn't God, as the maximally perfect and all-loving being, just give EVERYONE, all humans throughout history, including those who claim to be non-resistant nonbelievers, undeniable proof of His existence?”** – or something along these lines.

Well, yelling out from to roof tops for God's *“undeniable proof!”*, is easy enough on the surface. But stop and think for a moment about what is ACTUALLY being said here...

What is undeniable proofs of God?

What would those even look like?

- As a willing, open, truth-seeking skeptic who is genuinely held back by the argument from divine hiddenness in order to become a Christian, you must have surely thought carefully about this a lot during life's many sleepless nights and extra thoughtful days, right? Of course you have. You have, right? Or?

So, OK. What do you specifically want the God of the universe to do for you? What do you want? What must be done?

On a popular level, both online and offline, the classic top example and demand from skeptics to God as undeniable proof are; *signs and wonders in the sky*.

“Why can’t God just...do something like this?”
On the surface, this might come across as valid claim and reasonable objection.

But even many atheists have identified a few of the problems I am about to point out. *And there are several more on the list that I’m just going to skip.*

Before we continue, I want to lay down some reasons specifically in response to the skeptic's top answer about signs and wonders in the sky. This allows me to paint a visual picture and use a good example of why the Undeniable Proof Argument indeed fails in several ways.

Afterwards, I will also present further points in my response – which will actually apply to, and cover; *all kinds of other conceivable scenarios and suggestions for undeniable proofs from God.*

So why doesn't God reveal a spectacular show on the sky, jointly given to ALL people who have and ever will exist from A to Z – **given openly, visibly and audibly in a fair way to all people throughout human history?**

Like, for example, a real *WOW SHOW* in the sky with lots of colors, rays, lights and powerful forces in motion which spell the words; “I am the Creator and GOD of the Universe. I exist. Jesus lives.”

– or something along those lines?

+ *Also a mighty divine voice proclaiming such a thing from the heaven as well? (For those who cannot read).*

OK... First of all, in what language? Are you aware of how many languages have died out throughout human history? How many languages have arisen in just the last 500 to 1000 years? Not to mention how much the vast majority of national languages have updated themselves so enormously in just a couple of hundred years – that a modern person today would not have recognized their own language from the old days.

(The Lord's Prayer in Old English¹⁸ from the 9th century is a good example).

So the celestial Wow Show in the sky, would not only require a continuously update in order to be understandable and accessible through the ages for each living generation (in text and speech) – it would also have needed to keep up with how history has shaped and changed the geography.

- Many countries have for example through war and amalgamation, both expanded and lost territory.

And in order to be visible and audible in the sky, jointly revealed in a fair way to all humans throughout history – the whole show would thereby also have needed to be in all the world's languages that have and ever will exist!

(Both in speech and text, in updated versions for each relevant time period).

Also remember that many countries see the same sky and have fairly similar time zones – but very different languages!

And on top of this, just in one country alone, there are also many different kinds of foreigners who do not know the national language where they live...

So yes, if God's heavenly show is to be jointly revealed in such way that all humans, from A to Z, throughout history would be able to see and hear it – it would definitely have been, quite a mess for eyes and ears on the sky...

And it all gets worse! Because as people are constantly being born, and that people die at all age groups – such a spectacular, visible and audible Heaven Show from God would therefore have needed to be pretty much non-stop, throughout history – in order for it to be given fair and jointly to all humans that have and ever will exist!

High frequency would have been necessary regardless of whether we are talking about a world population of 8 billion people in 2024, or a world population of 1 billion in 1804.

Because before the world reached a billion people, the average life expectancy globally was far lower than it is today, and people generally had larger families. Many teenagers and young adults died alone from for example being soldiers at wars and from living in a time period without access to modern medicine.

- So in order to ensure that all of these people got to experience at least one Wow Show in the sky from God as proof – necessitates that such demanded Heaven Show would have had to occur close to constantly throughout history, mathematically speaking.

And although today we live in a time where life expectancy is much higher all over the world, and people generally have smaller families (especially in Western countries), in return, the world population is now well over 8 billion people...

So the mathematics on the required frequency of God's heavenly 'Sky Show' for today, has not gone down – but up!

In other words, regardless of time period, if the world had a billion human population or not – the repeated cycle of constant births, and deaths in the teens or as young adults worldwide – will necessitate that God must constantly perform such 'Wow Show' in the sky – in order to be always up to date and cover all of these.

This would entail that those live to be well into adulthood and old age, will experience such “undeniable proofs” from God with signs and wonders on the sky – very, very often in their lifetime...

So for 10 people in a city, God's heavenly Sky Show would for example have been of perfect timing regarding their life situation, age and date of death.

- But for 10,000 others, this phenomenon would have been experienced so many times that it would rather have had bad effects and produced negative results!

What do I mean by this?

► **Well, how long do you think it would have taken for people to become indifferent, disinterested and 'meh' to such events and “undeniable proofs”?**

► **And how long do you think it would have taken before people would have seen these as annoyingly distracting and actually repulsive?**

*“Crap... God's sharp and shiny show on the sky.
AGAIN. Argh! Great. Just great. Now it will once again
be traffic jam on the roads, which will make me late for
work and to drop off the children at kindergarten!”*

Or...

*“What on earth is going on?! Oh... This whole, God’s
heavenly Wow Show. AGAIN. And I am supposed to
sleep with this bright light and noise right outside my
window?... Great. Just great. And I who have early exam
in the morning and an important day at work... Argh!
Why this night?! Why always on the worst times for me?!”*

**Given enough amount of these heavenly
“Wow Shows” and long enough time, God’s
undeniable proofs would then have been something
A LOT of people would compare to an annoying,
unwanted and sudden thunderstorm – on a day
where one was enjoying time at the beach with a
picnic and swimming.**

- Imagine how many people alone in e.g. USA, China,
India and Great Britain that God must day and night
give a Sky Show of “undeniable proofs” just within
a timeframe of 1 month – in order to keep up with
the circle of life?

This repetitive ‘Wow Show’ in the sky from God
*(of necessity if being jointly revealed in a fair way to all
people who have and ever will exist in human history)*

– will for most people, especially those who live to be older than like, 30 years, be experienced an annoyingly amount of times (*both in text and speech in many languages*) – and quite often, at a moment during the day or in the night that was of extremely bad timing for them...

So for 10 people, God's repetitive Sky Show will actually be a life-changing, first time and unique WOW-experience – and of perfect timing in terms of their age, date of death, time zone and living situation.

BUT for 10.000 others, it will have a repulsive “Again?!”-effect and ultimately be, as shown, just as unwanted as a sudden and annoying thunderstorm on a day when you are enjoying yourself at the beach with a picnic and swimming.

The skeptic's top answer about the demand for signs and wonders in the sky from God is thus problematic for many reasons, more than mentioned here – IF they are to be jointly revealed in a fair way to ALL people who have and ever will exist in human history from A to Z.

There is no way around these mentioned problems.

They are unavoidable if God's spectacular show in the sky of “*undeniable proofs*” is to be given jointly and fair, in an audible and visible manner, to ALL people throughout human history...

UNLESS GOD made some divine tricks and adjustments so that all people who had seen this spectacular Sky Show satisfactorily enough times to be “undeniable proofs” of God – received some kind of "umbrella" over them that made them immune from seeing and hearing the whole thing again and again in life? *In other words, so that the heavenly show from God in the sky would not be of bad timing, repetitive, and downright annoying and repulsive over time?*

- Including tailor-made for each time zone, language and all foreigners in every country who do not know the national language? This would also have removed a lot of text, sound and "mess" from the sky.

Yes. Sure. God could certainly have done something like this with this heavenly show, BUT... Do you see where we now have ended up with regarding God's spectacular Sky Show with “undeniable proofs” – *revealed in a FAIR and JOINTLY way to ALL people who have and ever will exist throughout human history from A to Z?*

- In order to avoid all the mentioned problems, INDIVIDUALIZATION with specialized changes and tailor-made customization, is ultimately then required pretty much for each individual person. Sooner or later.

This would, however, resulted in some extremely dangerous and dysfunctional societies!

Imagine the fatal consequences of individuals around the world, at various times throughout day and night, suddenly falling into some kind of trance where they are stunned by seeing and hearing a spectacular, tailor-made show in the sky from God to them individually?

Think of the horrific scenes that would unfold daily around the world – when these occurred to for example individual motorists, pedestrians, train drivers or air traffic controllers...

- The traffic alone would have turned into a worldwide bloodbath as a result of such individualized Sky Shows! In many professions and everyday situations, a distracting and sudden individual “trance” where one sees and hears a private, tailor-made sky show above from God – could quickly result in very dangerous situations both for the individual under the mentioned “umbrella” – and for the surrounding people there.
Deadly consequences included.

We can of course talk and philosophize about alternative worlds, metaphysics and realities to try to get around some of this. But the point is ultimately the same;
The problems are, as shown, far too many if signs are to be given fair to all in a jointly way. “Perfect and right timing for 10, while annoyingly and repulsive for 10,000.” #OneSizeDoNotFitAll. Eventually, God's "undeniable proofs" must ultimately be individualized as tailor-made revelations for the individual.

So, then...

What if God just appeared at your door as a luminous and spectacular being and said; “Hello (*your name*), I am the Creator and GOD of the Universe. I exist. Jesus lives.” – or something along those lines?

WHAT does the GOD OF THE UNIVERSE, just like "Genie in the Lamp" from Disney's Aladdin movie, specifically have to do for you? What do YOU want of spectacular and undeniable proofs?

- Again, as a willing, open, truth-seeking skeptic who is really held back by divine hiddenness from becoming a Christian – surely this is something you have thought a lot about during life's many sleepless nights and extra thoughtful days, right? It is, right?

Well, if so, regardless of whether it was the skeptic's classic top answer that demands a ‘Sky Show’ (*which we just uncovered and dismantled both at a joint and individual level*), or if you are sitting on other hypothesized scenarios of what THE GOD of the Universe should do specifically for you in terms of “undeniable proofs” (*like your own personal Genie in the Lamp from the Aladdin movie*) – either way, with ALL of them, there are huge, fundamental problems.

Yes.

All of them.

Every and any scenario.

Much relevant to specifically this, have already been pointed out indirectly in the course of the last five chapters of this book – logically, theologically, philosophically, biblically, and with data from cognitive science.

But let me now put forward a couple of points specifically in response to the ‘Undeniable Proof Argument’ that we are looking at here in Chapter 6.

My friend, can you for example have 100% proof that the sensations you and I have – are NOT just from existing in a ‘life simulation computer game’ by some technologically advanced aliens? Something like the popular computer game; “*The Sims*”?

No. You can't. Because this is an ontological and epistemological question about how we are viewing evidence and our fundamental reality...

And at the end of the day, that is something you can only decide and do – with FAITH.

And we do this ultimately with everything in life.

Truth to the matter is that there is ULTIMATELY no such thing as “undeniable proof”. Because both epistemologically and ontologically, there is always room for deciding to reject them from truly being “100% undeniable”.

*“An amputated arm that heals and grows back again” ,
“That the water in front of you is divided in two just
like for Moses” , “The common or private examples we
just went through with God’s performed Sky Show”*

It can all be as spectacular, mind-blowing and unique as anything you can imagine!

- BUT REGARDLESS of which hypothesized proofs of God that are “undeniably” WOW on the table, what stops a skeptic from immediately, if not sooner or later – just reject and dismiss them all as for example:

- (1) Experiencing hallucinations**
- (2) That one has gone mad**
- (3) Manipulation using AI technology**
- (4) Forgery by use of hologram**
- (5) Visitation by some form of aliens**

The correct answer is: Nothing.

And as we've seen from cognitive science in this book; We humans have a strong tendency to really turn up our inner skeptical radar – when there is something we personally favor that is under pressure.

But you know what? Let's ignore all of that just for a moment. For the sake of the argument. Let's run with the fact that the Undeniable Proof Argument actually works without any problems whatsoever.

So then, for the sake of argument, let's say that you now have everything that can logically be seen, heard, touched and experienced by God's spectacular and “undeniable proof”.

So even if you tried, the whole thing could not be dismissed or rejected – i.e. it could not possibly be taken as a anything else but 100% 'the real deal'.

- Just like you can't possibly hold your breath for 1 hour although you can try for a few minutes.

So, OK... Granted. Now what?

“What do you then think would have happened?”

- That ALL people would then have repented with humble surrender to God in true faith, obedience and love by their own free will – NOW, AND FOR ALL ETERNITY?

Angels and other spiritual beings had “undeniable proof” that God existed – but that still did not stop the heavenly rebellion and fall from happening...

In the beginning, humans also had “undeniable proof” that God existed – but yet, the fall still happened...

And the same about “undeniable proof” can also be said about the time of the Exodus and Moses.

- God then freed the people of Israel (*and a large portion of mixed multitudes from foreign nations who followed them*) – out from slavery with many spectacular miracles, signs and wonders – not only in Egypt, but also in the wilderness. This did not stop them from eventually choosing sin, rebellion and disobedience to God.

- So from the perspective of an internal critique, historically and biblically – the answer is; “NO. History would have repeated itself.”

These 3 examples alone provides enough biblical basis to conclude that “undeniable proof” to ALL people who ever have and will exist, from A to Z – *would NOT have resulted in that all people would then have repented with humble surrender to God in true faith, obedience and love by their own free will – neither now, nor for all eternity...*

And simple probability calculation will certainly indicate that there are a lot of people out there who are like this – at least if we are actually going to take them at their word, and not call them liars...

Because when e.g. nearly 16,500 atheists (86% out of 19,000) responded in that previously referenced survey from The Atheist Experience in 2021; that even if God existed, they would **not** have worshiped him – it gets pretty fast clear that this drawn, biblical conclusion is not only supported on an internal basis, but also an external basis.

And what also simply cannot be ignored when the skeptic's argument from divine hiddenness is on the table (Undeniable Proof Argument included!), is this;

What does THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE have in sight as the ultimate end result?

GOD has a “Renewed Eden” filled with all His sanctified people in sight. This is what we for example. read in the last two chapters of the Bible, in the book of Revelation.

▸ Another relevant objection from the skeptic that often comes up, is the claim that God almost literally performed miracles on every single page of the Bible...

- *“Its therefore unfair that God is 'silent' with miracles today, but not during the biblical time period!”*

Both claims are incorrect. To address the latter claim first; One can literally find a great load of reliable research from the PEW Research Center¹⁹ that points to millions of people who have either witnessed or experienced miracles themselves.

Many of these are also very well documented – I refer to the book; *“Miracles Today”*²⁰ by Professor Craig S. Keener, published by Baker Academic (2021), and the following linked essay from *The New York Times*²¹ (2022) which is based on mentioned PEW Research Center surveys.

I could have gone deeper into this topic, responded to typical objections and more – but the purpose of my response to this particular objection, was ONLY to refute the very claim that God is supposedly “silent” with miracles today.

- When referenced research and data from the PEW Research Center point to several millions of people who claim to have witnessed a miracle, or experienced a miracle themselves, the skeptic's claim thus becomes quite empty and toothless.

▸ And the other skeptical claim that God literally performed miracles all the time in the Bible, is also demonstrably wrong.

There are approximately 250 miracles documented in the Bible. The number of miracles from Abraham up to the time of Jesus and the apostles can be said to be around 200 in total.

If we were to distribute these on the biblical timeline, it would amount to 1 miracle every eight years.

1 miracle each decade-ish is definitely far from the skeptic's “*miracles all the time in the Bible*”-claim.

- And of course it wasn't the case that miracles happened at a fixed time every eight years!

Miracles were rare events in the biblical times, and miracles are rare events today. That's what makes a miracle a miracle – **by definition.**

In biblical times, miracles occurred when new revelation needed confirmation – through a miracle from God.

There are hundreds of years in the Bible – without a documented miracle from God (*The Intertestamental Period / The Deuterocanonical Period*).

Truth to matter is that most of the miracles in the Bible, can be divided into just 3 time periods;
The time of Moses, the time of Elijah, and the time of Jesus & the apostles.

For some readers, now it may be a good time to refresh and review what we went through in;

Chapter 4

– “*What about non-resistant nonbelievers?*”

Chapter 5

– “*The Bible has answers to Divine Hiddenness!*”

- There is little point in me repeating all this again here under Chapter 6. But, when we get to the fourth objection now in Chapter 7, which is just around the corner, I will go deeper into;

“What about all the people in human history who have never heard of Jesus, or received and understood the gospel?”.

So with that little extra laundry done, before I move on to the next chapter for responding to several of the skeptic's relevant and best objections to my Christian theodicy response here in this book, I will first round off this chapter we are in now on the skeptic's "Undeniable Proof Argument" – with the following brief conclusion;

What we have looked at throughout this chapter, is that even if there were such thing as 100% “undeniable proof”, and this was given to EVERY human being who has and ever will exist, from A to Z, up through all human history (*whether it was a sky show or something else entirely, and whether it was given jointly or individually*) – it can be concluded based on several reasons we have looked at here, that this would NOT have resulted in the outcome that the Undeniable Proof Argument indicates with its underlying rhetoric.

This conclusion stands as demonstrated, not only solid planted on biblical grounds as an internal critique – but also well supported by external sources such as e.g. the results from that referenced survey by The Atheist Experience in 2021.

CHAPTER 7

Five skeptic objections answered

I would like to remind readers that my presented theodicy answer has been built both individually – and collectively on data from the Bible, theology, philosophy, logic and cognitive science. In other words, from many different angles.

Therefore, skeptical objections in the form of only 'Whataboutism' – are NOT sufficient enough as valid counterarguments to what is actually presented of data in this theodicy.

I would also like to remind readers again that the argument from divine hiddenness is an internal critique of the Christian faith. Internal. Don't forget that.

From several angles, I have now presented my Christian theodicy answer in response to the academically strongest version of the skeptic's argument from divine hiddenness (**Undeniable Proof Argument** included!) – *to ensure that technically speaking, all imaginable scenarios can be covered – leaving no stone unturned.*

But there are 5 objections from the skeptic that I wanted to answer in a separate chapter , as a relevant bonus. These are the ones that have a strong enough relevancy to put indirect or direct pressure on my presented theodicy answer here.

Many who are reading this book, may not even have thought of these potential objections – at least not at first. But here you'll get them anyway, because as just mentioned, every decisive stone is to be turned in this book.

As you can see at the beginning of the book's chapter overview of Contents, I will now answer the following five relevant objections:

- «Contradiction in Job! Satan in GODs presence!»
- «God hardened Pharaoh's heart! Free will?»
- «No purpose & morals on atheism?!»
- «What about those who have never heard?»
- «Free will has been scientifically #debunked!»

Whether you skip a couple, go through them all with me, or go straight to the epilogue and my final thoughts in this book – you choose entirely for yourself.

- At least now you know what awaits you here at the very end.

► (1) **“How could Satan and evil be in the presence of God in the book of Job – without being consumed by His full holy glory?” ◀**

In the relevant places, especially in Chapter 5 of this book, where I give a *biblical answer* to divine hiddenness – I have quoted several passages from the Bible that are all clear on that God's full holy glory and presence is like a consuming fire...

It is therefore with good reason that this has traditionally been the dominant interpretation. But isn't this quite problematic – given what is written in *Job 1:6-18*?

I will present 3 direct answers to this skeptical question here, but there are also first a couple of other relevant things that you should keep in the back of your mind.

- Relax, I am not going to unpack loads of pages about the long and heavy book of Job in this subchapter. This is also not necessary in order to answer the skeptic's objection here at hand.

Biblical Hebrew is incredibly rich in the way it expresses itself, but the entire language is quite small, just over 8,000 words in total²².

It therefore requires even more from the reader who really wants to capture the context, genre and message as the author and original audience from thousands of years ago understood the text. Certain words can actually be translated to have multiple meanings depending on the context.

That is why it is so essential to occasionally do word-studies, check several translations and how often the original word in question appears elsewhere in the Bible. *Job is no exception of books in the Old Testament that are often extremely misrepresented.*

Too many people also isolate a passage strictly into its chapter and verse only. But chapters and verses are modern invention in our Bibles – done for navigation purposes, but that's not how the original biblical text were written.

Among many biblical scholars, the book of Job is considered to be the oldest book in the Bible. Job is a book that consists of prologue, wisdom literature, epos (epic poetry) and epilogue. The book of Job is truly a unique literary masterpiece of its time – incomparable to other works from that time period in Mesopotamia.

This is also what world-renowned Bible scholar Dr. John Walton documents excellently in his book; *'Job (The NIV Application Commentary)'* ²³.

Let me present a brief explanation from two very prominent biblical scholars on the Old Testament, with two very different interpretations and conclusions from the text – both with many valid points and support in the field.

One is Dr. John Walton, whom I just mentioned. The other is the late Dr. Michael Heiser (it seems that the majority lands close to the camp of one of these two interpretations). But for those who don't, I shall offer some of my own comments at the very end that will also cover possibly this remaining group.

● In the book; 'Job (*The NIV Application Commentary*)', Dr. John Walton makes some very interesting remarks²⁴ about the book of Job. Here is a summarized and adapted quote from page 33-37:

“As I have taught Job to students over the years, the question frequently arises; ‘What sort of God is this who uses His faithful ones as pawns in bets with the devil?’

– I would suggest that this question is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the prologue.

The scene in heaven, like the speeches of Job’s friends, is part of the literary design of a thought experiment to generate discussion about how God runs the cosmos.

The prologue is not trying to teach us how Job got into such a difficult situation, or what angelic beings do or do not have access to God's presence.

The message of the book is offered at the end, in the speeches of God, not in the opening scenario, which only sets up the thought experiment. The book is focusing on how God works in the world, **not teaching us about how things work in heaven."**

- Dr. Michael Heiser has a completely different interpretation of Job – a view which is also extremely interesting, in his popular book; *'The Unseen Realm'* ²⁵. On the next couple of pages, I shall give a brief summary of his remarks as well.

Many people know that "Satan" means; "adversary" and "accuser", but what many do not know, something you can check the texts for yourself in biblical Hebrew and the original language via e.g. Interlinear.Com or other Bible dictionaries – is that King David, is also described as a "satan" – to the Philistines (*1 Sam. 29:4*)!

Not only that, but you know the one and only unique **"Angel of the Lord"** we find in the scriptures? Who in at least 12 different verses in the Bible (see my end note²⁶) speaks as God, identifies with God and performs God's actions (*in other words, this is a manifestation of the Triune God / YHWH*)

– Well, even this being, the ANGEL OF THE LORD Himself, is described as a "satan" to Balaam (*Numbers 22:22, 32*)!

And no, this is not problematic.

Because, to repeat, this word in biblical Hebrew only means by itself; “adversary” and “accuser”.

The vast majority of Bible translations (but not all) use in *Job 1:6* a capital first letter for the word; “Satan”, just as if this was the very name of this heavenly being that appears in the story. But it is somewhat a bit problematic to translate this word here into “Satan” – with a capital “S” ...

Why is that? Because in biblical Hebrew, the original language of the Old Testament and book of Job, it’s written; “**ha satan**”...

So, a definite article...

Neither the Hebrew nor the English language tolerate a definite article before a real personal name. It will be just as bizarre as saying my name is; “THE Daniel”, or that my wife's name is; “THE Veronika”.

In short, what Heiser and people in this camp are suggesting, is that the original rebel; Satan, from the heavenly rebellion and fall in Gen. 3:1 (**נחש** *nachash*; “the serpent” or “the shining one”) ²⁷ is NOT the same heavenly being that we see in Job 1:6.

So who is it then?

God has given man as His image-bearers – roles and tasks on earth in this physical world...

BUT we also see several scriptures in the Bible that refer to the spiritual world – and heavenly beings (*aka*, “*sons of God*”) appearing as a kind of an administration in a divine assembly and council – **ALSO with roles and tasks given by God.** (*See e.g. Psalm. 82:1-82, 1 Kings 22:19, and Neh. 9:6*)

The triune and uncreated GOD is perfect and lacks nothing by definition as the maximally perfect being.

He did not need to create a heavenly family of “sons of God”, nor an earthly family of humans, His physical image-bearers.

It is only by His undeserved love and grace that we are even created at all, and given unique communicable attributes such e.g. free will – to actually also be able to have a true mutual love relationship with Him.

So biblical theology from such scriptures + rules within biblical Hebrew, have convinced Heiser and many other biblical scholars that this heavenly being in Job 1:6 cannot therefore be Satan with a capital “S”, but rather one of the members of the divine council – with a God-given task as the “accuser”.

To quote Dr. Michael Heiser;
“God does not have Satan on His payroll”
and “God does not make bets with Satan”.

We read multiple places in the Bible, as for example Luke 8:17 that; *“For nothing is hidden that will not be revealed, and nothing concealed that will not be made known and brought to light.”*

- And as the Bible also several times mentions “heavenly books” such as the ‘Book of Life’ and a handful of other books (*see e.g. Dan. 7:17, Mal. 3:16, and Rev. 20:12-15*) – some of the tasks and roles God has given the sons of God, includes among other the administration of these.

Again, this is not because Almighty God needs help, but because He also wants to allow His created heavenly family to participate, serve and contribute in a true mutual love relationship.

Job, was a very rich man with great wealth – among the largest in the East thousands of years ago.

In the first chapter of the book of Job, we read that the sons of God presented themselves before the Lord – and among them was also the “accuser”.

When God ask the accuser for a work report about his observations on the earth, God brings up Job in the conversation as a truly outstanding example of a human who strives to do what is good in God's sight.

Now, remember, GOD is omnipotent, the maximally perfect being...

He knows the deepest secrets of our hearts.

(See e.g. Psalm. 147:5, 1 John 3:20, and Heb. 4:13)

- So what happens in the story is that the accuser crosses the line when he talks back to GOD regarding Job, with a comment that is way above his paygrade for his participating role in the divine council – which he got from? The Creator. The **ALMIGHTY** GOD...

In short, to paraphrase, the accuser says to God that; “Yeah, well, don’t get too excited there, ALMIGHTY GOD and Creator... You don’t know Job as well as I do. *The reason* Job is so good, just and unique – is because You have blessed and protected him and his family.”

And literally in verse 11, the accuser claim and challenge God that if Job had lost everything, Job would surely have cursed God to His face.

This is a serious challenge to God from the accuser...

God could have responded with; “*You think you know Job better than I do? Have you forgotten that I am the Creator and ALMIGHTY GOD who know and see the heart of all creatures? So how dare you, my pitiful little creature, to challenge Me like this?*”

God could also have followed up such response by just completely annihilating this being right there and then!

But what kind of tyrannical message would this have sent to all the spiritual beings in heaven? And would any of this have really provided a refuting answer to the accuser's serious challenge to GOD?

NO. *The question of whether the accuser had a good point and was possibly on to something here, would have always hung in the air for all eternity to ponder on among the spiritual beings in heaven. And us humans.*

So the accuser's challenge in the divine council is met. What many also forget is that in a biblical worldview, death is not the end of it all – but a change from the physical world to the spiritual world. An even vaster reality than what we can imagine.

The Creator of the Universe, GOD (with capital letters), *also does not actually owe us humans anything.* Not even the slightest.

And continuing with the internal critique, let us also not forget that God is omnipotent. God is truthful. And that God has FOREKNOWLEDGE.

So in the story of the book of Job, God withholds His undeserved blessings on Job for a time. And apart from killing Job, this allows the accuser free rein to prove his; *“I am right about Job, and You, Almighty GOD, are wrong!”*-challenge. This would eternally leave no room for the accuser to ever be able to say to God or any spiritual beings in heaven;

“Yes, but if only I could have done this or that – THEN I would have been proven right”...

- For all times, that’s now a card that neither the accuser nor anyone else will ever be able to use.

Notice that either one takes Dr. Michael Heiser's interpretation from biblical Hebrew, '*ha-satan*' / *accuser from the divine council-view*, or Dr. John Walton's interpretation from *literary device* – the fact either way remains that both of these high-ranking Bible scholars on the Old Testament agrees in the following conclusion;

“The book of Job does NOT communicate an event where Satan (with a capital 'S' included) was actually exposed to God's full holy glory and presence.”

So the skeptic's question and relevant objection against my theodicy answer to the strongest version of divine hiddenness – receives no support from what is perhaps two of the world's most influential and respected Bible scholars on the Old Testament.

Now, I could just have called it here and be happy with that fact... BUT, I also want to offer a solution and explanation to that group out there who for some reason are hesitant to both of these two different academic answers from Dr. Michael Heiser and Dr. John Walton.

- A couple of things I would like to further point out, is that these scriptures in focus were NOT specifically written down with the goal of answering metaphysical questions about the spiritual world in detail. We really have to take this into account.

Not only that, additionally, the biblical authors, inspired by the Holy Spirit, are still at the end of the day, only humans. We can certainly get some picture that there are some form of interaction and relationship between God and His family of created heavenly beings, ***BUT linguistic anthropology, i.e. human languages, is quite limited when it comes to putting into words how various things are and work in heaven; a non-physical reality. We don't have language for that yet.***

The incarnation of the Triune God in the Son, Jesus Christ, means that we as humans can actually relate to Him – the infinite God of the universe. (See e.g. Heb. 1:3-8, John 1:1-14, and Phil. 2:5-11).

It must also be pointed out that there is a difference on being in “God's presence” – and on being in His “full holy glory”. (See more in e.g. Chapter 5)

An attempt to merge these into one – is an unsupported conflation both on logical and biblical grounds.

But what is it like in the afterlife? In the spiritual world?

And in the divine council? The heavenly sons of God are created, limited, non-physical spiritual beings...

So what does it really mean when it says that "*the sons of God presented themselves before the Lord*" in the divine council?

How exactly did GOD reveal himself there?

Ontologically, God is not just a non-physical being (*John 4:24*)... He is also uncreated and infinite!

So it therefore follows both logically and biblically that in Job 1:6 when "the sons of God presented themselves before the Lord" – God's full holy glory and presence is thus in a limited and shielded form – IF indeed it is Satan with a capital "S" that is described in that passage...

The same would also have been the case in the Garden of Eden where “the Lord's *presence* walked with man”²⁸ – and where Satan also had some form of access.

Also remember that Jesus actually mentions the eviction of Satan from heaven in Luke 10:18 – “*I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning.*”

Now, all people who read the Bible (or any other text for that matter), all come with certain personal presuppositions as lenses – no one reads a text from a 100% blank point of view. Including me and you.

In this PHYSICAL world, man's *visible* body burns,
while *invisible* helium – does not burn...

Something related to this, may very well also be the case
with heaven and the spiritual world.

At the very least, we can all agree that heaven and earth,
the spiritual world and this physical world
– will have some major metaphysical differences.

Conclusion; my relevant point about God's full holy
glory and presence in this book's theodicy answer
to divine hiddenness – has been thoroughly shown to not
be problematic for the scriptures in question.

I have presented here three interpretations as justification
– including from two world-renowned Bible scholars on
The Old Testament.

► (2) **“If God has given man free will and wants to have a true, mutual love relationship with us – why did He then harden Pharaoh's heart?”** ◀

That God has given His image-bearers communicable and unique attributes such as, among other things, “*a human free will*”, something that makes us even CAPABLE of having a true mutual love relationship with Him – are both two points that I have argued biblically for in this book.

Love in its truest form is also something one would expect from GOD – as the maximally perfect and all-loving being.

Since the skeptic's objection and question, as with most in this book, is again an internal critique, based on the biblical texts – I shall of course then also give an answer, based on the biblical texts.

- “*Poor, poor, innocent Pharaoh...*

It says that God made his heart hard, so it was not Pharaoh's fault that he was hardened and stubborn during the 10 plagues in Egypt!”

Something along those lines, right?

It's at least something like this that I've seen and heard the most online and offline over the years...

In the Bible, we often see that the texts is written down with a polemical angle against the pagan idols. This may very well also be an underlying point in this narrative.

Exodus' wording in biblical Hebrew of *Pharaoh's heart* as “strong, heavy, or hard” in a negative and rebellious way – is very interesting. Why? Because Pharaoh is thus also considered evil according to Egyptian mythology, his own religion.

In Egyptian mythology²⁹, before the human soul was granted access to eternal life, the heart was first tested by being weighed on the scales together with the feather of Ma'at – the goddess of justice, order and truth.

If the heart was not balanced on the scales, i.e. that it weighed more than the feather of Ma'at and was thus evil – the female demon Ammut, known as “*The Devourer of the Dead*”, with a hybrid body consisting of the three largest man-eating animals known to the ancient Egyptians; crocodile, lion and hippopotamus – would then come and swallow the evil, heavy and hard heart...

This would not have been unknown knowledge among the people who left Egypt – which also included non-Israelites as well (*more on this shortly*).

So who was Pharaoh? Pharaoh was a royal title for the ruler of Egypt. The pharaohs were also considered more than humans, they also had divine status. They were gods in Egypt.

Many biblical scholars and experts in biblical Hebrew – as e.g. Prof. Tim Mackie and Dr. Michal Brown, have pointed out that a good number of the modern Bible versions have complicated the text in the translation when they have translated “khazag” (*verb for “become hard” in biblical Hebrew*) – to a passive verb – when it is actually a static verb in the original language. The word itself is thus ambiguous.

So during the very narrative of the 10 plagues of Egypt (*Exodus, chapters 7 to 11*), God is first described to harden Pharaoh's heart at the sixth plague, while Pharaoh again hardens his own heart on the seventh plague. Then God harden Pharaoh's heart again on plague 8, 9 and 10.

But at the first 5 plagues, the verb for the hard heart is either ambiguous (1, 3, and 5), or Pharaoh himself hardening his own heart (2 and 4)...

As a king and god of Egypt, one could also say that Pharaoh's heart was hardened by GOD – really just by the fact that GOD is the GOD; YHWH, the filthy Hebrews and slave laborers' God...

Pharaoh was unwavering in his heart. And he would not swallow his pride and humble himself before God – even when it took a serious toll on the wellbeing and health of his own Egyptian people.

- And yes, God does say before the 10 plagues to Moses that He will harden Pharaoh's heart – something we read in Exodus 4:21. BUT, what is the important context?

Because, what does God say one chapter BEFORE that? What's written in Exodus 3:19?

“But I KNOW that the king of Egypt will NOT let you go UNLESS compelled by a MIGHTY hand.”

“I, the LORD, probe into people's minds. I examine people's hearts. I deal with each person according to how he has behaved. I give them what they deserve based on what they have done.” (Jeremiah 17:10)

The Pharaohs were brutally evil rulers...

Not only did they keep the people of Israel enslaved in hard labor for a long time. The Pharaoh at the time when Moses was born for example, fearing their growth – issued a command to have every baby boy of the Israelites to be thrown into the Nile River and killed... (See e.g. Exodus 1:22)

So the skeptic's painted picture of Pharaoh as a poor victim here in this objection and critiquing question – is completely the opposite of what we actually see in the text. As demonstrated, the broader context in the book of Exodus shows this pretty clearly.

Furthermore, God had both foreknowledge and full visibility of Pharaoh's heart condition. Pharaoh was NOT a man with a humble heart open for repentance to God. Pharaoh had made himself unshakable evil.

And again, that's why God also says to Moses **BEFORE** sending him to Egypt; “*But I KNOW that the king of Egypt will NOT let you go UNLESS compelled by a MIGHTY hand.*” (Exo. 3:19)

Now, when we get to *Exodus 12:38* we read that people of “**a mixed multitude**” went out with the Israelites from Egypt – which most likely also included Egyptians who wanted to follow and serve YHWH, the GOD of the Israelites – after all the mighty miracles He had done in the land.

The timing of everything was perfect!

As we see in the Bible, God used an unyielding wicked Pharaoh in his own embraced sin, hardened his heart in it – *and used this to also call out from Egypt a mixed multitude of people; non-Israelites from foreign nations, who had a willing and open heart.*

This is also Paul's point in *Romans 9:16-18* and onwards into the next chapters. God takes in and gives grace to whomsoever He wills (regardless of people and nation) – and God hardens whomsoever He wills, in use for the good.

- And this also includes the Jews, His own disobedient people whom in many both wandered away from God's truth AND on top of everything – despised and crucified The Son, Jesus Christ.

God is omnipotent...

God has foreknowledge...

And God sees straight to the heart...

So with this in mind, who are we at the end of the day, as created, finite beings – to answer back to the infinite Creator Himself, The GOD of the Universe?

- Where did the humbleness go?

As the ultimate chess player with foreknowledge and full insight into the human heart, God has timed disobedience, sin, hard hearts and the sealing of people in their unyielding and self-chosen wickedness – in use for the good; bring salvation to the world through Jesus Christ (*John 3:13-20*).

And back in the Old Testament, Joseph made the exact same point as the apostle Paul.

Joseph speaks in *Genesis 50:20* about how his jealous brothers attacked and sold him as a slave to Egypt for evil – but how God used him in this for good. Long story short, God used Joseph to save that part of the world from a seven-year famine (*Genesis 41:1-57*).

- So, did GOD harden Pharaoh's heart? **Yes**.

- But was Pharaoh exposed to a hard-heart surgery by God which removed his human free will as one of God's image-bearers? **No**.

The reality is that many people deliberately and repeatedly hardens their hearts against God – which does leads to God eventually giving them over to their own lusts and desires.

This is nothing new. We see several examples of this in the Bible (*See e.g. 1 Gen. 11:8-9, Zech. 7:11-12 and Rom. 1:26-27*).

Pharaoh was NOT a “programmed robot” who had no chance in life of being able to humbly repent with regret, clothe himself in rags, sit in the dust and fast – **just like the king of the wicked city of Nineveh did in Jonah, chapter 3 - and RECEIVED grace from the prophesied judgment and destruction from God.**

*“God opposes the proud,
but gives grace to the humble.”*
(James 4:6)

► (3) “Are you implying in Chapter 4 that atheists cannot be nice people or have ‘a meaning in life’ because they do not believe in God?” ◀

Although a Christian may of course be unclear, *(or just be completely ‘way out there’ apologetically)* – it is actually quite common that when the key words; “atheist”, “Christian”, “GOD”, “objectivity” and “the foundation of moral values and duties” are mentioned in the same sentences – will whatever point the Christian is making, often be grossly misheard or misunderstood by the skeptic who went into full defensive mode when some of these words came up.

It’s therefore important to be very clear about these. Which is the reason why I chose to include precisely this skeptical objection / question above here in this third subchapter.

Atheists, just like Christians, are humans created in the image of God – and therefore, still able to reflect aspects of God's goodness. It’s as simple as that.

So no, I was far from implying in Chapter 4 that atheists cannot be nice people since they do not believe in God.

- *But what about meaning in life?*

Many atheists have family, friends and children as the meaning of life.

Others have to make as much money as possible in order to enjoy the most material goods such as houses, clothes and travel. Social status and power is another motivating factor.

And for many other atheists, modern Epicureanism is the meaning of life.

So no, I never suggested that atheists cannot have 'a meaning in life'.

They will quickly find something else to take that first place in life.

... Someone, or something other than God.

Notice that during Chapter 4, I also didn't present the moral argument for God's existence or as 'The anchor' to ground objective moral values and duties.

- That's all for a completely different discussion.

BUT, what I DID pointed out in detail there, and with referenced sources, as part of setting up my flipped Christian version of the atheist's same claimed; 'seeking-and-absolutely-open-to-becoming-a-Christian'-argument (used in conjunction with the strongest version of the argument from divine hiddenness)

– was that **in a godless universe – NOTHING has an OBJECTIVE** moral high ground above me – neither individuals nor societies.

We are all the result of a cosmological and purposeless coincidence from “nothing” (which is actually “something” – but just, definitely not God!).

So what people, aka collections of bacteria and cells, are fizzing of different brain reactions from each other as “good” or “bad” – is ultimately; **JUST SUBJECTIVE**.

► (4) “What about all the people throughout human history who have never heard of Jesus and the gospel?” ◄

A man came home from a trip abroad to the building where he lived on the very top floor. This was a big Norwegian man who weighed over 100 kg. With him, he also had a heavy suitcase from the trip. The old building he lived in, was without an elevator. So when he got to the front door of the building, he called his little 3-year-old son and said;

“Get yourself down those stairs immediately! You are now to carry daddy and this suitcase on your back, up all the stairs, all the way home up to the 10th floor. And IF you can't do that, you're no longer my son – I then want you out of my life forever!”...

Unbelievably insane, right? Unthinkable and crazy. Totally unjust! Completely unheard of! Yes, I know...
- **But isn't it strange that it's EXACTLY LIKE THIS, people think God IS, regarding His justice and plan of salvation for mankind?**

God is the maximally perfect and all-loving being! That's the Christian faith. And this is not just based on theological and biblical arguments alone...

- Because there are also many logical and philosophical arguments that points to that a being like GOD (with capital letters) is, and must be per definition;
“The maximally perfect and all-loving being.”

And as you can see from the premises listed at the beginning of Chapter 1, there are good reasons why the academic and strongest version of the skeptic's argument from divine hiddenness, fronted by Prof. J. L. Schellenberg – is constructed with word choices that establish God as “maximally perfect” being in love.

This is not just based on biblical and theological reasons, but logical and philosophical reasons.

Many people out there, should therefore strongly consider to rethink their current image of God.

Notice that this fourth skeptical question and objection we are looking at now under this fourth subchapter, on top of being an internal critique, it's also a moral question – aimed specifically at an allegedly objectively GOOD GOD that Christians believe exists – the maximally perfect and all-loving being.

In other words, this skeptic question and objection underlying already entails both that the biblical God exist, AND that objective goodness and evil exist.

(How else will the skeptic want to objectively judge an objectively good God that the Christians believe exist?)

And with this granted by the skeptic (**just for the sake of the argument, of course!**), he or she will from that go on to argue that the objection in this fourth subchapter is demonstrating that GOD, the maximally perfect and all-loving being; does NOT exist.

- And it is to this that I now will respond.

So, whether it is my parable of the father who demanded with an ultimatum that his 3-year-old son carried him on his back all the stairs up to the 10th floor in order to merit his continued fatherhood – OR, the underlying assumption in this fourth skeptical objection regarding the people in the “unreached” category;

“...That God apparently sends these people automatically to hell! End of story. Oh well. Tough luck for them, I guess...”

- That is to say, people with a willing and open heart, people that WOULD HAVE ACTUALLY surrendered with repentance, obedience and love by their own free will to God IF they only had received and understood the gospel – and heard about Jesus...”

I reckon that in both cases, we can all agree that both these scenarios are completely unfair. Nowhere near neither “all-loving” or “maximally perfect”, right?

In other words, not a being like GOD, by definition – neither according to Christians, nor according to the academic strongest version of the argument from divine hiddenness – which I’m answering in this theodicy book.

So, TECHNICALLY speaking, I’ve could have just now stopped my response to this fourth skeptical objection and question. Because neither I, nor the skeptics, believe in this type of God.

But I am NOT interested here in just poking holes on an argument, trying to win a debate, taking shortcuts, come off as a bit smart etc. – and, done deal!

I believe there is sufficient enough information in the Bible for answering the question and objection brought up here in this fourth subchapter.

- And I really want to help the skeptics out there who are willing, open and searching. Those who are really not in that mentioned “86% skeptic group” from Chapter 3.

I wish to provide helpful answers to aid their own journey and investigation of the Christian truth claims.

And if you are one of them, who genuinely wonders what the Bible says about cavemen and pagans in this context? People in the Old Testament who lived and died before Jesus walked the earth?

Babies, children, dementia patients and people with reduced cognitive faculties?

- Unreached people who lived and died after the time of Jesus – 2000 years ago and until today? And people in general who have never heard of Jesus or received and understood the gospel?

Well, then we are and remain on an internal critique of the Christian faith – and THAT is something I can help with.

Although the Bible does not directly answer a couple of these, there are many answers and relevant information to be gleaned from the biblical writings.

Now, when we go to *Matthew 28:18-20*, we read that Jesus calls us to make disciples of all nations...

But what about all the people in these “unreached groups” that I just mentioned – who have never received and understood the gospel, or heard of Jesus?

First and foremost, always remember; “Made in God's image” is not one or more qualities that you and I have. It's a status. Period. An undeserved status given by God.

Your physical or mental condition, nationality or age – does not add to, or remove this fact as your status. Mankind, all from Adam, have been given an **undeserved status** by God as His physical image-bearers.

So whether it's a fetus in the mother's womb,
or a 96-year-old grandmother on her deathbed;
All people are created in God's image – and are
one of His image-bearers.

- That also includes people in these “unreached groups”!

Now, of all the people in the “unreached groups” that we
are about to look at, the Bible is the most indirect (*and*
"silent" if you will) on babies, children, dementia patients
and people with reduced cognitive faculties. Let's begin.

So, let's go for the definition of GOD that both
Christians hold to – and the definition the skeptics
hold to (*in its premises under the academically strongest*
version of the argument from divine hiddenness).

- And with this in the back of our mind, on top of the
relevant scriptures from the Bible that we are now about
to go through – we do have enough on the table to draw
reasonable conclusions that fetuses, babies, children,
dementia patients and people with reduced
cognitive faculties – are absolutely covered by
God's grace.

Let me give a couple of biblical examples;

When we read that King David's baby died, he says in
2 Samuel 12:23 the following; ***“I go to him, but he does
not return to me”...***

King David is an extremely important figure in the Bible. Only Jesus is mentioned by name more times in Bible. And there is no doubt that King David here seems pretty sure in this verse that in God's rest when he dies, he will meet his baby boy again.

Furthermore, when we go to passages such like Deuteronomy 1:39, we read about; “***...your children who do not yet know right from wrong ...***”

Or in Isaiah 7:16 where we see words like;
“***...before the child knows how to reject evil and choose what is right...***” – one start to see a pattern...

Dementia patients, and people with reduced cognitive faculties – are not mentioned specifically by word in the Bible, such as babies and children are.

BUT, as elaborated on a moment ago, based on what GOD (with capital letters!) is by definition, what is granted here for the sake of this argument, as well as the biblical examples I have now given regarding babies and children – ***it can very reasonable be concluded that ALSO dementia patients and people with reduced cognitive faculties can be placed in the same category as them throughout human history; “Covered by God’s grace.”***

Because everyone mentioned so far in this group, have all in common of being in a state where cognitive faculties and reasoning on topics and questions at focus here – is severely minimal or even absent.

Jesus Christ, God incarnate, says in Luke 18:15-17, when people brought infants to Him for blessing³⁰; ***“...Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God...”***

Children are also a focus in Matthew, chapter 18. And after Jesus had told the parable of the ninety-nine hundred sheep, He says; ***“...So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven for one of these little ones to perish...”***

OK...

But what about the others who are in these “unreached groups” mentioned in the beginning of this subchapter?

- I will now present some of these relevant truth claims, and yes, *from the Bible*. Because remember, the skeptic's argument is still an INTERNAL CRITIQUE of the Christian faith – which we get from? Yes. The Bible. So in the Bible we will stay.

Let's keep going.

Now, as for the other groups – whether one is a cave man, heathen, pagan, an Israelite in the Old Testament, or an another of God's “unreached” image-bearers before or after Jesus walked the earth – there are actually a good handful of interesting and clarifying passages in the Bible which we can go to for an answer to exactly this.

Old Testament (Habakkuk 2:4)

“Notice their arrogance – they have no inward uprightness – but the righteous will live by their faith.”

New Testament (Galatians 3:11)

“Now it is obvious that no one is justified in the sight of God by the Law, because “The righteous will live by faith.”

In other words, “saved by faith” is a concept we find in both The Old- and The New Testament. The old covenant, the law, was not given so that Jews and Gentiles, then and now – was to be saved BY keeping it...

- The law was given during the theocracy in the wilderness, to the people God delivered from slavery in Egypt. It was given for sanctification purposes, to make God's people aware that sin is not something that can be taken lightly.

(Romans 3:20)

“For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are.”

The apostle Paul also quotes *Genesis 15:6* to use Abraham himself as an example that it has always been about how one responds to God's revelations, by faith – which makes one justified in God's eyes – by His undeserved grace and love.

(Romans 4:3)

“For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”

Do notice that we are talking way, way back in the Old Testament here. Abraham lived 400 years before the law was given under the theocracy to Moses and the people God delivered from slavery in Egypt. Abraham was never in a position to follow the Law of Moses – and the same applies to many other humans who lived before and after him throughout history, around the world.

(Galatians 3:8-9)

“The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “All the nations will be blessed in you.” So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.”

All Abraham could do, was to respond in faith to what He received of individual light and revelations from God – and act accordingly as best as he could.

We will soon go into how this is something God has given, and gives to us all.

But back to Abraham;
Notice that **his works were the fruit of his faith.**

That's why Abraham is used as a prime example for us all to do the same; have trust in God and a living faith. As we have seen examples of, we find precisely this in both The Old- and New Testament.

And speaking of The Old Testament, there are also many other figures here who are listed as believing examples – by name, in Hebrews, chapter 11; such as e.g. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Jacob, Joseph and Sarah.

So here we are talking about people who lived hundreds of years before the Law of Moses, and a couple of thousand years before Jesus walked the earth.

Several other names also appear in the chapter from after the section on God freeing the people out of Egyptian slavery.

And we could also have gone to other biblical passages.

Yes, even Rahab who was a heathen and a prostitute – is mentioned as a believing example and justified for how she responded in Jericho to what she had of light. (See e.g. Heb. 11:31, Josh. 2:10, and James. 2:24-25)

“All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen and welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.” (Hebrews 11:13)

So what have we found in Hebrews – chapter 11, as a biblical example?

Specific names. Women and men. Israelites and non-Israelites (Gentiles). In the Old Testament.

(Whom all lived way over a thousand years and more before Jesus walked the earth and brought the new covenant. But they all put their trust in God with their lives – in hope and faith in His promises, timing and faithfulness).

For this they are listed and described as believing examples – justified for their response to what they individually had of amount of light and revelation from God – in living FAITH to Him.

So, is this a biblical principle that ALSO applies to other people in the “unreached” category? Like, groups of other individuals on the planet who lived before and after Jesus – until today?

People who never heard of Jesus, or received and understood the gospel?

Something I want to point out, even though I am not at all saying that this absolute applies to everything and everyone around the world. Throughout human history, there have been many religions and people groups who have worshipped the ultimate Creator GOD (*with capital letters*) of the land that they observed around them – including life, the sun, the moon and the stars.

The Luba tribe³¹ in the African DR Congo is one of many examples. They call the ultimate Creator GOD; “Efile Mukulu”, which means the “Great Spirit.” They have a concept of good and evil, soul, life after death, rituals, sacrifice and prayer. They have no temple. Because they believe that God is everywhere as the Great Spirit, the ultimate and powerful – worthy of worship.

With that said, the Luba tribe also believes and practices many things that Christians do not. Things that most Christians would probably have distanced themselves from.

But, as mentioned, it is very interesting to see historical examples of the concept people had of God in many unreached tribes and people groups around the world. *To quote the ancient philosopher Aristoteles, there must be a ‘first cause’ ... An “Unmoved Mover” of it all.*

- Although it has been foggy to these people as to whom THE GOD really is, it has not been foggy THAT He is...

And the Bible is far from silent and ignorant of all this.

We see traces of this in for example the book of Acts, chapter 17, verse 22 and 23, where the Apostle Paul says the following;

“Men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in all respects. For as I went around and observed closely your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: ‘To an unknown god.’ Therefore what you worship without knowing it, this I proclaim to you.”

In any case, what’s biblically certain at the end of the day; is that *the believing and willing hearts in these mentioned “unreached groups”* from the dawn of time until today, with less light and revelation – ONLY enter the kingdom of God – not by themselves, but exclusively **BY, IN and THROUGH Jesus.**

The same applies to all people who have and ever will exist in history, from A to Z.

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.”

(John 14:6)

“To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through His name.”

(Acts 10:43)

- We also find other highly relevant passages in the Bible for this unreached group who have never heard of Jesus, or received and understood the gospel.

(Romans 1:20)

“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, that is, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, being understood by what has been made, so that they are without excuse.”

(Romans 2:14-16)

“For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.”

- So, both the creation itself and our conscience are two witnesses that the invisible God has given man about His existence – from before the time of Jesus to after the time of Jesus – all the way up until today.

And please don't forget, dear skeptics – we have already been through earlier in this subchapter; the “unreached group” with for example babies, children, dementia patients, and people with reduced cognitive faculties. Keep that in mind as we are moving forward as well.

So, from Jews in Israel to tribal people on a deserted jungle island, from heathens to cavemen – everyone has since the dawn of time, observed for example the incredible nature surrounding us, under the phenomenal sun in the sky.

And everyone has stood under the night's, full starry sky and felt enormously small – having a humble feeling that fills the heart with: *“Wow, so big and beautiful. What or who is really behind all this?”* , *“How can something non-living give life to something as incredibly alive as myself, animals and nature?”* , *“Who am I, that think and feel all of this – the inner voice within me?”* ...
– Things along these lines.

So when you and I, every God's image-bearer and human being in history, stand before Him on judgment day, WILL, as the scriptures say; the creation around us, and our conscience, ***be witnesses*** – and we will be without excuse before God for how we responded to what He gave us of individual light and revelation.

“For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light.” (Luke 8:17)

To this day, the Holy Spirit has been very active on many fronts.

You are for example just a small Google search away from seeing the huge amounts of Muslims experiencing Jesus in dreams and visions...

The late Dr. Nabeel Qureshi is one of many, and his award-winning book; “Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus”³² is a highly recommend read.

Additionally, I myself have interviewed an old friend and former Muslim on my YouTube-channel³³. The start of his conversion to the Christian faith was also, just as for Dr. Nabeel Qureshi – triggered by Jesus in dreams and visions. ***This is actually a fairly well-known phenomenon*** and a recurring pattern that can be clearly observed among many Muslims who become Christians.

Here in the West (*with occasions of exceptions, of course*) the consequences of apostasy from Islam in a practicing environment are usually a “social suicide” where ties and connections are cut from family, friends and former environment. Which in of itself is a horrible scenario to be in alone, but it’s actually EVEN WORSE in other places around the world...

If you know the laws under Islamic Sharia, which is practiced partially or fully in most Muslim countries – apostasy is punished with everything from prison to execution³⁴.

So Christians from a Muslim background therefore often becomes truly “on fire” for Jesus. They often become really cool and brave Christians. Because for them, there is an extra high price to pay in life when becoming a Christian...

So their reason and testimony for becoming Christians, is certainly not something one can just easily handwave and brush off as just a little cute dream or vision.

Most people do not put their life in danger or turn everything upside down in life like that – unless it’s a very real and very big experience.

On the last page of the Bible, Revelation 22:17, Jesus says the following;

“Let everyone who is thirsty come! Let anyone who wants the water of life take it as a gift!”

“BY”, “IN” and “THROUGH” Jesus is mentioned time and time again in the Bible. Prophetised in the Old Testament, and fulfilled in the New Testament. (See for example, Isaiah 49:6 and Matt. 12:17-21).

**Jesus is the saving and undeserved bridge to God
– for every and any willing, open and thirsty souls.**

(Jeremiah 17:10)

*“I, the LORD, probe into people's minds.
I examine people's hearts. I deal with each person
according to how he has behaved. I give them what
they deserve based on what they have done.”*

(Isaiah 55:8-9)

*“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.”*

Based on what we have been through in this subchapter here on the skeptic's fourth objection and question, I want to end with a couple of additional points that it is a solid foundation for that we can trust GUDS justice – **ALSO when comes to the willing and open hearts in these mentioned “unreached groups” throughout human history.**

God WANTS EVERYONE to be saved! But God does not force unwavering and unwilling people into His presence – against their own will – for all eternity...

Such as e.g. the mentioned “86% skeptic group” I have referred to a couple of times in the course of this book.

(Ezekiel 18:23)

“Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?”

(2 Peter 3:9)

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”

(1 Timothy 2:3-4)

“This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

And additionally, per definition – both according to Christians, and according to the skeptic's premises from the strongest, steel-man academic version of the argument from divine hiddenness (to which this entire book also responds), GOD is described as a being that is; *“maximally perfect and all-loving”*...

● No one is therefore a more fair and better judge than either – by definition.

“...God is love...” (1 John 4:16)

So... If God is love... If God is the maximally perfect and ALL-LOVING being, then He will also, *by definition*, desire a true and mutual love relationship with us, humans, created in His image...

- But true love cannot be programmed, bought or forced – it must be given out of free will...

As elaborated on in Chapter 5, this is one of the reasons why this undeserved gift and communicable attribute is given by God to mankind, His image-bearers.

The Bible is very clear that **God looks at the heart**.
(*See scriptures such as Jerem. 17:10, Luke 16:15, Acts 1:24, and Heb. 4:13*).

Of all hearts throughout human history, from A to Z in “unreached groups”, nothing is hidden from God's sight of our intentions, sincerity and heart condition
– **a TRUE seeking and open skeptic included.**

Now, to avoid repeating and addressing same points all over again also here, I will refer to the previous chapters:

■ Chapter 2

– “*One of us*”

■ Chapter 4

– “*What about non-resistant nonbelievers?*”

■ Chapter 6

– “*Response to the Undeniable Proof Argument*”

► (5) “Haven't scientific experiments disproved the existence of our free will?” ◀

Because that a human free will is a concept that can be strongly defended experientially, logically, philosophically, theologically and biblically (*which we have also gone through in the course of this book*) – the skeptic will therefore very often attempt to bring up scientific experiments, as refuting counterevidence to the existence of indeterministic free will – in relation to the many thoughts we have, the choices we make and the actions we take – given the human abilities we possess.

The skeptics will on these occasions frequently bring up a type of scientific experiment called; “Libet Experiments”³⁵ – named after Benjamin Libet, who was the first to conduct such an experiment in 1983. The same results from his first experiment have also been confirmed in recent times by conducting similar experiments.

Subjects were connected to instruments and asked to watch a moving dot on the screen of an oscilloscope that circulated just like a fast clock hand. Then, the subject was asked to mark the position of the moving dot when he / she was aware of the conscious decision to make a finger movement. *The Libet Experiments measured in other words; the time it took for the test participants to become consciously aware of their decision to move their finger in these experiments.*

The results showed that approximately ½ second before the test participants became consciously aware of their decision to move their finger during the experiment, a small jump in brain activity occurred which Libet called; “The Readiness Potential”. It's almost like a “unconscious decision” that takes place in the brain.

Many skeptics have typically used the readiness potential as proof that it is only our materialistic brain that makes decisions. So, even if our inner “I” thinks that it is “My” decision – in reality, it’s all just an illusion of free will that is being experienced...

Even Libet himself disagreed with this conclusion. And with good reason. Because this was only the first half of the test. His scientific experiment did not stop there – something that maybe many skeptics who use this as an argument today, are not aware of.

Libet asked the subjects to do something more than this. He also gave the following instructions during the test; *“When you have decided on something – then decide not to do it.”*

When the subjects did this, the results showed that there was a readiness potential for lifting the finger to press the button... BUT, there was no readiness potential for **not pushing the button...**

Libet said that this does not prove the existence of free will, but it does prove the existence of FREE VETO!

In other words, we humans often have thoughts, impulses and motives that are beyond our control. We cannot stop these from coming, but we CAN stop ourselves from carrying them out...

So attempting to use the Libet Experiments as an argument against the existence of free will, is therefore very problematic for several reasons. Let me finish by quickly giving a couple more here.

The assumption that the readiness potential is identical to the decision itself – is far from established. Furthermore, the assumption that a few decisions applies to ALL of life's decisions – is extremely problematic and lacking.

- Deciding to marry – or not...
- Deciding to have children / adopt – or not...
- Deciding to take a higher education – or not...
- Deciding to start a new job – or not...
- Deciding to relocate – or not...
- Deciding to commit a criminal act – or not...

VS: *to rather arbitrarily, quickly and spontaneously lift a finger to press a button or similar...*

The available options given to the subjects during both the original and modern version of Libet Experiments – *is in a confined environment and **vastly different** from life's real decisions where free will is on the table.*

It's not comparable at all.

All this, culminated with the discovery of “free veto”, adds up to a handful of problems for this skeptical argument.

To learn more about the scientific evidence and arguments that point to the existence of free will and that we indeed “*are more than just our brain*” – I can e.g. refer to the following sources from neurosurgeon and Prof. Michael Egnor³⁶, as well as the research from one of the world's foremost experts on neuroplasticity; Dr. Jeffrey Schwartz³⁷ in the endnotes.

And in addition to all this, publications from Prof. Alfred R. Mele can also be recommended. For more on free will and the problems Libet Experiments + recent scientific experiments are faced with in disproving its existence, I can refer to among other his book; “*Free: Why Science Hasn't Disproved Free Will*”³⁸.

There is little point in me under this subchapter to again repeat everything relevant about human free will and God's omnipotence – that I have already thoroughly presented in the course of this book's previous chapters...

But there are two popular and relevant objections about human free will that I have not yet responded to so far in this book, and this I will do now as a bonus here in the closing.

► **(I) “If humans really have free will, doesn't this also mean that there will be sin in heaven?”**

The skeptic's objection deals with the fact here that several passages in the Bible indicates that there will not be sin in heaven and eternity (see e.g. the last two chapters in the Bible). So if humans really have free will, then a future fall will be inevitable in heaven and the eternity to come.

Response:

No, dear skeptic.

Free will in heaven does NOT entail that there also will be sin in heaven and eternity sooner or later...

Our body of sin will be transformed into the glorified, sinless and resurrected body of the Son, which God incarnate, in Jesus Christ – built in time and space when He walked among us in our physical world – and has the power to give all His children.
(See e.g. Phil. 3:21 and 2 Cor. 5:1-5, 17)

Yes, with our free will in heaven, we will technically, still always have ***the liberty to choose*** sin, rebellion and disobedience against God. BUT, because we in heaven are given the glorified, sinless and resurrected body as sanctified, purified, transformed and renewed in Jesus Christ – we will therefore never ever in eternity fall into sin.

In the new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21:1-4) we will be what we were created for; God's children and His physical image bearers.

Remember that in heaven and the eternity we will also see the full and far bigger picture;

- What is really being actualized by using our free will to choose disobedience, rebellion and sin against God...

- What kind of grotesque evil is actualized on all fronts by not trusting God and His word...

For all God's children, in eternity, choosing sin will be more disgusting, unthinkable and repulsive to us than to:

- put hands on the burning hot plates of a kitchen stove
- eat the poo from your dog or cat
- jam a sharp pen into the eye and pull it out

We have the liberty to do all these things here and now, but from obvious reasons – we don't!

The 1st example on the list above, many of us did try when we were kids (maybe the 2nd as well)
– despite repeated warnings from our parents...

And when we one day decided to ignore these, we learned our lesson with a solid “Ouch!”, “Eww!”, and “Boo-hoo!” – in the hard and painful way, with never going back...

- The 3rd I hope you have never, or ever will try!

I could have mentioned many more graphic examples, and in far more gruesome detail here – but I assume most people got the point here from these three.

► (II) **“If God has foreknowledge, how can humans then truly have free will?”**

The skeptic's objection has the assumption that God's foreknowledge necessitates predestination – and thus, human free will does not exist.

Response:

This is incorrect.

God can predestinate some things – without predestining everything. Especially when He shares out of His undeserved grace and love for us humans; *His unique and communicable attributes* such as “free will” – Something that makes us, His image-bearers, actually even CAPABLE of loving, and having a true mutual love relationship with Him.

So, no...

Foreknowledge does not necessitate predestination.

Let me give another two more examples to disprove this skeptical objection. One from the Bible, included.

Let me start by just giving a regular logical example;
Suppose I’m going to pick up my wife at the airport late at night. We then go straight home to watch a football match on TV, the Champions League final.
But we are watching it on replay.

Because the match was finished before I went to get her at the airport late that night. I had actually already watched the live broadcast of the match with my friends BEFORE I went to pick her up at the airport.

Obviously, my wife had naturally been offline a lot during the flight time – as well as actively avoiding spoilers about the match by accident before she got home – so that she could enjoy watching the entire match in the comfort of our home on the television.

I know the final score, who the goal scorers are, which team had the most chances, who got a red card, etc.

My wife knows that I have foreknowledge about the match – but I am not blamed for causing the events that unfolds from the match.

Because it's the environment of the match, the heated intensity and coincidences – topped with the footballers' acquired skills in life all the way up until matchday, the player personalities and free will to make the various decisions during the match – which ultimately paints the outcome of the match, the situations and the final score.

- Me and my foreknowledge in this scenario, had NO impact on anything that happened at all in the match!

In Isaiah 46:10, God says;

*“I make known the end from the beginning,
from ancient times, what is still to come.*

*I say, “My purpose will stand,
and I will do all that I please.”*

- Let me tie this verse in with the example I just gave, one can in a way say that God has predestined the following; **THAT** there will be a victorious team. And **WHAT** will be the prize of the victory.

The victory prize is;
a renewed Eden and eternity in the presence of God.
He who is the source of life and all good.
(See e.g. Rev. 21:1-27 and Rev. 22:1-21)

The victorious team is;
those who are saved by God's undeserved grace and love. That is, all God's children with a humble, loyal, and believing faith in what they individually have of light and revelation from GOD
– accomplished **IN** , **BY** , and **THROUGH** Jesus Christ.
(See e.g. John 3:16, Acts 10:43, and Gal. 3:26)

Just because UEFA (i.e. Union of European Football Associations) gives the opportunity and arranges a Champions League final match that is played to the very end so **THAT** there is a victorious team – does not mean that UEFA stands behind **WHO** wins the match and all the footballers' individual decisions in the 90+ minutes that leads up to the result...

The same is true with God. **THAT** people are saved and choose to cling to Him – does not mean that God is standing behind **WHO** individually decide to do this or not – as if it all was His own little puppet theater.

How we individually choose to respond to what God has given us of light and revelations, is OUR responsibility. *(We went through this in detail in previous subchapter – objections included).*

Now, ALL analogies are lacking when we talk about a timeless and omnipotent God – with human language and scenarios from within creation... So misunderstand me not in my comparison of what I say, and don't say.

However, this was in any case just one logical and regular example of that foreknowledge does not necessitate predestination.

But I can also raise this with my response. There are also biblical examples – and here you get one of them;

The story in the Bible that I will use as an example, can be found in 1 Samuel, chapter 23, verses 1 to 14.

I am not going to quote all fourteen verses here in this book, but feel free to check them out later on.

Just to summarize the story very briefly; while David and 600 of his men were on the run from King Saul, the Philistines attacked the city of Keilah. But the city was saved by David and his men.

When this news spread to Saul, he planned to gather his army and go out to Keilah and surround David.

Let me quote verse 9 to 12 here;

*“David knew that Saul was plotting harm against him.
And he said to Abiathar the priest:
“Bring the ephod here!”*

Then David said:

*“O Lord, the God of Israel, your servant has surely
heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the
city on my account.*

- Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand?*
- Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard?*

O Lord, the God of Israel, please tell your servant.”

- And the Lord said:

“He will come down.”

Then David said:

*“Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into
the hand of Saul?”*

- And the Lord said:

“They will surrender you.”

After receiving these answers from God, we read on further that both David and his 600 men then packed up – and fled out of the city of Keilah which they had saved from the Philistines.

... And when King Saul heard that David and his men were no longer in Keilah, he canceled the plans to go out with his army to surround the city and take David there.

BUT... Did you notice?

What could we observe in the 4 verses quoted above?

God has foreknowledge of 2 things that NEVER happened!

HOW exactly God's foreknowledge works beyond this in deeper detail, I can't but speculate with my created and limited 1,5 kg physical human brain.

I am not God.

BUT what I have demonstrated here now, are logical and biblical examples that both disprove the skeptic's objection and claim that God's foreknowledge necessitates predestination.

EPILOGUE & ENDNOTES

A few closing thoughts

Dear Reader, I don't know where you currently are on Life's Journey, but there are a few things I want to share with you all here at the end.

The truth to the matter is that many arguments used so triumphantly against the Christian faith online and offline today as #ChristianityDebunked on Tik Tok and Instagram video clips – were already directly and thoroughly responded to by apologists such as William Paley in the year 1790, or even Justin Martyr as early as the year 155!

Skeptic or Christian; go deeper! Steelman your opponent. Be hungry for knowing the ABSOLUTE best answer – from both sides. *The Truth can handle it.*

So... Regarding the skeptic's academically strongest version of the argument from Divine Hiddenness, the Undeniable Proof Argument, and all follow-up objections we've looked at here...

Whatever your background, and wherever your journey goes from here – I hope the theodicy answer in this book has provided a clear, digestible and understandable explanation; of why Christians can reject these skeptical arguments from *divine hiddenness* – *with good reason*.

LIST OF ENDNOTES AND REFERENCES:

¹ Professor John L. Schellenberg | *Official website*

<http://www.jlschellenberg.com/>

² Argument from non-belief | *Different premises and versions*

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argument_from_nonbelief

³ Atheists examples | *Video from DanielApologetics YT-channel*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5VsnX2EWMk>

⁴ T.A.E. poll results | *Video from DanielApologetics YT-channel*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuNlcE0mR_I

⁵ Big Bang | *NASA Space Place*

<http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/big-bang/en>

⁶ Gombe Chimpanzee War | *A bloody war between to ape tribes in 1974*

<https://www.discovermagazine.com/planet-earth/a-brief-history-of-the-gombe-chimpanzee-war>

⁷ List of genocides | *Examples of past and current genocides*

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_genocides

⁸ River out of Eden | *Professor Richard Dawkins (p. 133)*

<https://www.amazon.com/River-Out-Eden-Darwinian-Science/dp/0465069908>

⁹ A brief history of humankind | *Professor Yuval Noah Harari (p. 438)*
<https://www.amazon.de/-/en/Yuval-Noah-Harari/dp/0062316095>

¹⁰ Open Mind | *Discoveries in Cognitive Science*
<https://direct.mit.edu/opmi/article/2/2/47/2950/Certainty-Is-Primarily-Determined-by-Past>

¹¹ Behavioral Science & Policy Association | *Cognitive Psychology*
https://behavioralpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/BSP_vol1is1_Schwarz.pdf

¹² Psychology Today | *You End Up Believing What You Want to Believe*
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/ulterior-motives/201107/you-end-believing-what-you-want-believe>

¹³ National Library of Medicine | *Wishful thinking, Desires and Evidence*
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/51072771_Wishful_Thinking_Belief_Desire_and_the_Motivated_Evaluation_of_Scientific_Evidence

¹⁴ Science Alert | *Lack of Intelligence is Not the Driver for False Belief*
<https://www.sciencealert.com/feedback-study-explains-why-false-beliefs-stick>

¹⁵ The Last Words | *Professor Thomas Nagel (c. 7 / p. 130)*
<https://www.amazon.com/Last-Word-Thomas-Nagel/dp/0195149831>

¹⁶ Biblical Explanation of "Holy of Holies" | *GotQuestions*
<https://www.gotquestions.org/Holy-of-Holies.html>

¹⁷ Dillahunty' statement (T.A.E. - 25.17) | *Timestamp 05:39*

<https://youtu.be/17sfpoynWkA>

¹⁸ The Lord's Prayer in 9th Century Old English | *Audio & Text*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbNovjvjt8>

¹⁹ Experience Or Witnessed Divine Healing | *PEW Research Study*

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2008/06/01/chapter-1-religious-beliefs-and-practices/>

²⁰ Miracles Today | Prof. Craig S. Keener

<https://www.amazon.com/Miracles-Today-Supernatural-Modern-World/dp/1540963837>

²¹ Essay by historian Dr. Worthen on miracles | *The New York Times*

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/24/opinion/miracles-neuroscience-proof.html>

²² Biblical Hebrew vs. Modern Hebrew | *B'nai Mitzvah Academy*

<https://bnaimitzvahacademy.com/biblical-hebrew-vs-modern-hebrew/>

²³ Job (The NIV Application Commentary) | *Dr. John Walton*

<https://www.amazon.com/Job-Application-Commentary-John-Walton/dp/0310214424>

²⁴ Dr. John Walton's book commentary on Job | *The Bible Project*

<https://bibleproject.com/articles/book-job-whats-going/>

²⁵ The Unseen Realm | *Dr. Michael Heiser*

<https://www.amazon.com/Unseen-Realm-Recovering-Supernatural-Worldview/dp/1577995562>

²⁶ Who is The Angel of the LORD? | *GotQuestions*

<https://www.gotquestions.org/angel-of-the-Lord.html>

²⁷ Was the Snake of Genesis 3 a Spiritual Being? | *Dr. Michael Heiser*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqY_61Ziu8Q

God's presence in the garden of Eden | *GotQuestions*

²⁸ <https://www.gotquestions.org/God-walk-garden.html>

²⁹ Pharaoh's Heavy Heart | *TheTorah.Com*

<https://www.thetorah.com/article/weighing-pharaohs-heavy-heart>

³⁰ Commentary on Luke 18:15 | *BibleRef*

<https://www.bibleref.com/Luke/18/Luke-18-15.html>

³¹ The Luba tribe, religion and beliefs | *Encyclopedia.Com*

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/environment/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/luba-religion>

³² Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus | *Dr. Nabeel Qureshi*

<https://www.amazon.com/Seeking-Allah-Finding-Jesus-Christianity/dp/0310527236>

³³ From Islam to the REAL Jesus | *Daniel Apologetics*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJJlWwAqlws&t=17s>

³⁴ Apostasy in Islam by country | *Overview with references*

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apostasy_in_Islam_by_country

³⁵ Libet Experiments | *InformationPhilosopher.Com*

https://www.informationphilosopher.com/freedom/libet_experiments.html

³⁶ The Evidence against Materialism | *Dr. Michael Egnor*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqHrpBPdtSI&t=1166s>

³⁷ Research on the Brain, Mind and Free Will | *Dr. Jeffery Schwartz*

<https://jeffreyschwartz.com/>

³⁸ Free: Why Science Hasn't Disproved Free Will / *Prof. Alfred R. Mele*

<https://www.amazon.com/Free-Science-Hasnt-Disproved-Will/dp/0199371628>

DIVINE HIDDENNESS

with good reason

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

*Text is written, collected and published by : DanielApologetics,
whom is as the author - responsible for the content of this book.*

Version : eBook

Publishing year : 2024

ISBN : 978-80-570-6331-5

Have you ever wondered, "Why doesn't God, as the maximally perfect and all-loving being, just give EVERYONE, all humans throughout history, including those who claim to be non-resistant nonbelievers, undeniable proof of His existence?"

Daniel, from DanielApologetics (YouTube) and danielapologetics.com, developed the book you now hold in your hands over a period of three years. A theodicy, this book also provides a response to the strongest academic version of the skeptic's argument from divine hiddenness against the existence of the Christian God, an argument typically fronted by Prof. J.L. Schellenberg. The text also tackles many other relevant skeptical objections.

The academic version of the argument from divine hiddenness is known to be one of the most hard-hitting skeptical objections and critiques against the Christian faith. Using the Bible, theology, philosophy, logic, and cognitive science as tools, Daniel builds a Christian theodicy that is both a defense of the Christian faith and an attack on this skeptical argument from multiple angles.

Leaving no stone unturned, this book addresses every relevant argument from divine hiddenness in a compact, direct, and digestible manner. For anyone who has felt the weight of this argument from the skeptics and struggled with its assertions, or anyone simply interested in a full spectrum Christian response to the argument against the existence of God, this book is worth a read.

For your FREE ebook or audiobook download, or to watch hundreds of videos on the topic of Christian apologetics, and to find out how to support the ministry work of DanielApologetics, see the links below.



Visit the official website and YouTube-channel:

www.danielapologetics.com

www.youtube.com/@DanielApologetics

